PUERTO RICAN WOMEN'S DRESS, 1895-1920:
AN ACCULTURATION PROCESS

A Thesis
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Master of Science in the
Graduate School of the Ohio State University

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The Ohio State University
1997

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This study investigated the process and extent to which acculturation occurred in Puerto Rican women’s clothing in the twenty-two years following United States sovereignty of the island in 1898. The time period of 1895-1920 represents the pre Spanish-American war years of 1895-1898, when Puerto Rico was under Spanish rule, the post Spanish-American war period of 1899-1917, when Puerto Rico became a U.S. possession, and the years 1918-1920, the time period following granting of U.S. citizenship for Puerto Ricans.

The descriptive historical survey was conducted by the examining photographs of affluent Puerto Rican women during the period of 1895-1920 and analyzing their mode of dress. The photographs were collected from archives, libraries, and museums in Puerto Rico. In addition, primary written sources about life in Puerto Rico (i.e. periodicals, books) augmented the data provided from photographs. Examining clothing worn by Puerto Rican women in photos revealed a detailed understanding of Puerto Rican fashion for the period. The fashionable appearance of Puerto Rican women was then compared with that of U.S. women to determine the extent of acculturation.

Similarities and differences in the dress of both groups of women were noted. Puerto Rican women throughout the period of 1895-1920, wore western “fashionable” dress similar to American women's dress. However, notable differences existed, as well. One difference regarded the time of adoption of aspects of U.S. dress.
After the Spanish-American war until around 1902, Puerto Rican women delayed adoption of fashionable American silhouettes. Additionally, Puerto Rican women did not begin wearing hats for several years after they became fashionable in the U.S. Another difference regarded the larger amounts of jewelry worn and accessories used by Puerto Rican women, than by U.S. women. Furthermore, the folding fan maintained a continued presence in the fashionable dress of Puerto Rican women.

The results of the study suggest that acculturation to American culture occurred in Puerto Rican women’s dress. Positive integration was reflected by the adaptation of U.S. elements of dress and the persistence of unique aspects of Puerto Rican fashion. Puerto Rican women’s incorporation of many aspects of American fashion is interpreted as a symbol of the new “modern” women in Puerto Rican society at the beginning of the twentieth century.
Dedicated to my husband and my family
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My sincere appreciation is extended to my adviser, Dr. Marsha A. Dickson, for her support, guidance, encouragement, and patience which made this thesis possible. The author also wishes to thank Dr. Patricia Cunningham and Dr. Nancy Rudd, members of the thesis committee, for their interest in and support of the study.

Appreciation is also extended to the archivists, librarians, museum personnel, and interested scholars in Puerto Rico, who assisted me during the research process. Special recognition goes to Mrs. Clara Lergier for her personal assistance and insight into Puerto Rican culture. A thank you is also expressed to the College of Human Ecology for the Multicultural Research Grant which provided financial assistance for travel to libraries and archives in Puerto Rico.

A special thank you to my husband, Daniel for his support and patience in the completion of the thesis. To my family and friends, a sincere thank you is extended for their encouragement and extensive networking in Puerto Rico, which aided in the completion of this research project.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Contact between cultures results in change. This change, called acculturation, may take place in any aspect of culture: material life, social organization, or religious belief. Acculturation can be a macro-level phenomenon, affecting many cultural institutions, or an individual experience (Pannabecker, 1986, p. 1).

The Spanish-American War of 1898, resulted in "a new era in the cultural history of Puerto Rico" (Fernández Mendez, 1973, p. 610). The war ended Spanish reign of Puerto Rico, made Puerto Rico a possession of the United States, and ultimately led to U. S. citizenship for all Puerto Ricans. The results of the war were experienced through almost all aspects of Puerto Rican life. The cultural encounter between the industrialized, largely Protestant United States and the agricultural, Catholic Puerto Rico was seen in changes in the government, education, economy, religion, and the social structure of Puerto Rico (Fernández Mendez, 1973, p. 605).

For women, this cultural transformation brought new opportunities they did not have before, including education and work (Métraux, 1952). With this new lease on life, most Puerto Rican women were still concerned with their appearance, they wanted to look and feel pretty and feminine (Cripps Samoiloff, 1984, p. 167). Since clothes
and fashion were an important part of Puerto Rican women's life style, how did they communicate their old Spanish roots and at the same time express their new American identity?

Statement of the Problem

The year 1898 was the beginning of a cultural transformation that molded what Puerto Rico and its people are today. The cultural changes, or acculturation, resulting from the contact between American and Puerto Rican cultures transformed Puerto Rico from a simple, poor, agricultural state to one of the most intricate, wealthy, industrial territories in Latin America. These changes were realized in a government that was more autonomous; Puerto Ricans received U.S. citizenship, and transportation became more efficient. Improvements in education, industry, and commerce were very influential in modifying the role of Puerto Rican women. The new found wealth resulted in opportunities to purchase more material goods.

Since "the adoption of material goods is often the first sign of culture change following contact between two differing cultures" (Pannabecker, 1986, p. 11), the reshaping of a society can be traced through artifacts made and consumed by Puerto Ricans during the period of transformation. In this study the relationship between cultural contact with the U.S. and changes in Puerto Rican woman's dress will be explored.

The purpose of this study is to determine the process and extent to which acculturation occurred in Puerto Rican women's clothing between the years 1895-1920. The time frame is divided into three shorter parts which reflect the distinct political periods, the pre Spanish-American war years 1895-1898, when Puerto Rico was under Spanish rule, the post Spanish-American War period, 1899-1917, when
Puerto Rico became a U. S. possession, and 1918-1920, the three years immediately following approval of U.S. citizenship for Puerto Ricans. The three segments were chosen because they correspond with important political periods that are likely to have produced distinct societal and cultural changes. Dividing the study into these time periods helps differentiate more clearly Puerto Rican dress before U.S. takeover, the aspects of U.S. dress that were adopted by Puerto Rican women due to the arrival of American influence after 1898, and further influence that occurred after women became U.S. Citizens in 1917. The elements of fashionable U.S. dress of the time period are identified and then compared to the elements of dress worn by the Puerto Rican women for the three periods. Elements of Puerto Rican women's dress are identified from photographs, periodicals, and/or existent garments of the time period.

Research Questions

To determine the occurrence and nature of acculturation in Puerto Rican women's clothing, a number of essential questions are posed:

1. What was the cultural context for the critical periods of 1898 and 1917?

2. What was fashionable Puerto Rican women's dress for the period of 1895-1920?

3. To what extent and when were Puerto Rican fashions influenced by U.S. fashions in the 22 year period immediately following the takeover in 1898?

4. Did acculturation have a positive or negative impact on Puerto Rican women?
Justification

Since changes in education, religion, government, and other social structures took place in Puerto Rico following the Spanish-American war, including the awarding of U.S. citizenship to Puerto Ricans, it is reasonable to assume that women's clothing also was influenced by American culture (Fernández Mendez, 1973). Besides changes in social institutions, change in Puerto Rican dress likely occurred because clothing, as an important aspect of material culture, plays a symbolic role in the mediation of the relationship between people, nature, and the socio-cultural environment (Schwarz, 1979). "Clothes do more than just indicate a person's sex, age, occupation, and position in a social hierarchy..." (Schwarz, 1979, p. 28), but in the dressing up, [an individual] addresses [herself], [her] fellows, and [her] world (Schwarz, 1979, p. 31). Consequently, to fully comprehend how the unique identity of Puerto Rican women was maintained and/or changed due to contact with the U.S., this study of women's dress is warranted. Additionally, results from this study could mirror future changes in material culture occurring with interdependence and the blurring of cultural lines.

Assumptions

1. Photographs used in the data collection are of Puerto Rican women residing in Puerto Rico.

2. Garments worn by these women are actual representations of the fashions of the time period and not some type of costume.

3. Limited trade between Puerto Rico and the United States prior to 1898 did not result in extensive adoption of U.S. fashion.
Limitations

This study is limited to the period between 1895 through 1920. The study will only look at women's clothing of the period; men's and children are not included. The Puerto Rican women studied will be the ones whose photograph have been taken. In many of the cases, it is known that the women in the pictures are of the well-to-do class, because of their family name or caption in a periodical. Even though the study is focused on this class of women, because of lack of information some photographs used for the study may be of women of other classes. Additionally the availability of sources of information (i.e. photographs, periodicals, garments) in Puerto Rico limits the research. That the sources of data may not be dated correctly, are not originally from Puerto Rico, and that the clothing worn in a photo does not belong to the wearer are other limitations in this investigation.

Definitions

The following definitions are provided for classification purposes in the study.

1. Acculturation: the contact and resulting change that occurs when two cultures come into direct contact with each other (Padilla, 1980, p. 4).


3. Clothing: "articles used by people to cover and to decorate themselves" (Horn & Gurel, 1981, p. 11).

4. Culture: "Culture... is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, arts, morals, law,
custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society”


5. **Dress:** “Dress of an individual is an assemblage of modifications of the body and/or supplements to the body” (Roach-Higgins & Eicher, 1992, p. 1).

6. **Fashion:** a style of dress that is temporarily adopted by a discernible proportion of members of a social group because that chosen style is perceived to be socially appropriate for the time and situation (Sproles & Burns, 1994, p. 4-5).

7. **Jíbaros** lower class of white peasantry in Puerto Rico, who generally worked in the coffee plantations.

8. **Mestizos** lower class of inhabitants of Puerto Rico of Indian and Spanish descent.

9. **Well-to-do Puerto Ricans:** affluent group of Spaniards on the island and their descendants, who could be categorized as high-class or high-middle class.

**Organization of Thesis**

The rest of the study is arranged in four chapters. Chapter 2 is comprised of a literature review of such pertinent information as the history of Puerto Rico, the concept of culture, the theory of acculturation and its application in clothing and Puerto Rican culture, the women of Puerto Rico and their dress, the structure of appearance,
and the fashionable U.S. women's dress between the period of 1895-1920. The methods used to carry out the study are detailed in Chapter 3. Puerto Rican women's dress is discussed in Chapter 4 and also compared with dress worn in the U.S. Finally, Chapter 5 addresses each research question and proposes future research in this area of study.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Although there are few secondary sources concerning Puerto Rican fashions, literature in related subject areas provides a useful background for study. Pertinent information was extracted from literature in the areas of cultural anthropology and clothing history since they correlated with the scope of this investigation. This chapter includes discussions of literature on several factors related to the problem, a) an historical overview of Puerto Rico, b) the concept of culture and how cultural identity and dress correlate, c) the theory of acculturation, its definition, Padilla's process of acculturation, and pertinent research, d) acculturation and clothing, e) acculturation in Puerto Rico, f) Puerto Rican women and dress, g) structure of appearance and dress, and analysis of clothing, and h) characteristics of U.S. dress common to the period of 1895 - 1920.

Historical Overview of Puerto Rico

The island of Borinquén was encountered in 1493 by Christopher Columbus during his second voyage to the New World. Columbus claimed the island for the Spanish crown by right of discovery and named it San Juan Bautista (Cripps Samoiloff, 1984). After 1521, the capital came to be known as San Juan and the island as Puerto Rico (Morales Carrión, 1983, p. 8).

Just as Mexico had an indigenous populace named the Aztecs and Peru had the
Incas, Puerto Rico had the Tainos. Just as these other indigenous civilizations were destroyed with the coming of the Spanish, so were the Tainos of the Arawak Tribes in Puerto Rico. Diseases and labor exploitation exterminated this culture (Cripps Samoiloff, 1984). Once the Spaniards realized they could not count on the native population to work the precious metal mines in Puerto Rico, in 1519 they started importing Africans as slaves to do the work (Scarano, 1993).

For the next four hundred years following Columbus' "discovery" Puerto Rico was under the neglected control of the Spanish regime (Métraux, 1952). It was under a cloud of disenchantment with the Spanish government that Puerto Ricans came to be involved in the Spanish-American war at the end of the nineteenth century. Even though in the early months of the 1898 conflict Puerto Rico showed its loyalty to Spain by siding with her, by the end of the month of May Puerto Rican sentiment had changed to support the U.S. cause (Scarano, 1993). History books have labeled the bombing of the U.S. ship Maine at port in Habana, Cuba as the key incident sparking the war between the United States and Spain (Scarano, 1993). However, the reality of the case is that the war between Spain and the United States resulted from the insurrection in Cuba against the Spanish government that started in 1895 (Scarano, 1993). Puerto Rico became directly involved in the conflict when the United States decided to invade the Puerto Rican island. With few casualties on both sides, the military campaign in the island lasted only three weeks, a reflection of the Spanish-American war itself which barely lasted four months (Scarano, 1993).

The 1898 Spanish-American war concluded with the signing of The Treaty of Peace by both Spain and the United States in August of the same year. With this treaty, "Spain ceded to the United States the island of Puerto Rico and other islands now under
Spanish sovereignty in the West Indies" (Fernández García, 1923, p. 111). Puerto Rico went from four hundred years of Spanish rule, to the commercial, political, and moral influence of its North American neighbor, the United States (Fernández García, 1923). With the American domination came changes in the governmental structure of Puerto Rico. In 1901, the "Foraker Act" came into effect, in which a civilian governor was appointed by the United States. In 1917, "The Jones Act" was passed by the U.S. Congress, giving U.S. citizenship to all Puerto Ricans. The year 1948, marked the first democratic elections for governor. In 1952, under governor Luis Muñoz Marín, Puerto Rico became a commonwealth, *Estado Libre Asociado*, of the United States.

In the following decades, even with prosperity, many of Puerto Rico's citizens did not care for the idea of a commonwealth, because “no es ni estado, ni libre, ni asociado” [it is not a state, it is not free, and it is not associated]. Indeed, the island's economy was, and some argue that it still is, dominated by the U.S. (Chang-Rodríguez, 1991, p. 281).

Taking into account the constant cross-cultural contact between Puerto Rico and the United States since 1898, potential for one or both of the cultures influencing the rate and direction of change as well as shaping specific cultural details is very probable (Harris, 1987).

**Culture**

The definition of culture comes in a variety of forms. Horn and Gurel (1981) generalized culture as “the traditional beliefs, values, and ideas of a group of people” (p. 496). Others see culture as “traditions and customs, transmitted through learning, that govern the beliefs and behavior of the people exposed to them” (Kottak, 1991, p. 2). One universally accepted definition of culture is Tylor’s (as cited in Kottak, 1991, p. 2).
p. 37), “Culture... is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, arts, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.”

Culture can be symbolic, and is shared, patterned, and learned (Kottak, 1991). It is symbolic, because it is a continuum of objects, such as utensils and clothing, and events, including rituals and games, dependent upon symbolling (Kottak, 191, p. 39). Culture is an attribute not of individuals per se but is shared by members of cultural systems or groups. Even though culture is constantly changing, certain aspects (beliefs, values, child-rearing, etc.) persevere (Kottak, 1991, p. 41). Cultures are integrated, patterned systems, where changes in one aspect lead to changes in other aspects (Kottak, 1991).

What is learned could deal with expressions of values congruent with society such as dress, social norms, cultural customs and traditions, and roles and their associated behaviors (Storm, 1987, p. 280). Culture is learned in a variety of ways. Individual situational learning occurs when group members learn from their own experience. Learning from other members of the social group is called social situational learning (Kottak, 1991, p. 37). This form of learning is also known as socialization, or enculturation which begins in the family, peer group or other groups to which an individual belongs (Storm, 1987, p. 279). An additional process of learning culture is through diffusion when one culture or society learns from another (Harris, 1987, p. 12). Diffusion is basically adaptive rather than adoptive, since a new behavior or attitude is interpreted with perceptual processes and does not simply substitute for existing cultural characteristics (Storm, 1987, p. 280). Adaptation
occurs more quickly with material objects, such as dress, than with non-material
cultural characteristics, such as values (Storm, 1987, p. 282).

**Cultural Identity and Dress**

"Clothing, costume, and cloth all serve as cultural artifacts or signs, speaking
in a silent language and communicating information visually without benefit of words"
(Schevill, 1986, p. 1). Dress as a form of symbolic communication can convey such
information as rank, class, status, region, religion, or age of the wearer to name a few
(Schevill, 1986, p. 1). For example, the Calcha of Bolivia, use dress along with music
and dance as a way to identify themselves in folklore competitions (Schevill, 1986, p.
2). In Amish society, the style of dress is "an expression of obedience to God..."
(Hostetler, 1995, p. 218). Their simple and practical, not showy or worldly, clothing
communicates religious beliefs and clarifies age, gender, and position within the Amish
society (Hostetler, 1995).

Even though groups, such as the Amish and the Calcha, use dress to promote
culture, dress can also be used to hide or change a culture. Hiding culture becomes
important when group members want to blend in or become part of another group or
society. This was the case with many immigrants who arrived to the U. S. at the turn of
the twentieth century. For example, immigrant Jewish women in a community of
Chicago traded their kerchiefs for fashionable hairstyles and hats during their struggle
to assimilate with American society (Schreier, 1994, p. 57). Others challenged
traditional Orthodox law as in the case of Anzia Yezierska. For this Jewish immigrant
her dark blue serge suit symbolized "her transformation into a successful, educated,
'real American' woman," so on her mother's death, she did not let the rabbi make a tear
on her suit as tradition would dictate (Schreier, 1994, p. 2). Through this act, she not
only partially denied her cultural heritage, but completed the process of acculturation.

**Acculturation Theory**

**Definition**

The concept of acculturation provides the theoretical framework for the study of
changes in Puerto Rican women’s dress after 1898. Acculturation has been defined as:

> phenomena which result when groups of individuals come into continuous
> firsthand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of
> either or both groups. (Kottak, 1991, p. 407)

Similarly, Padilla (1980) interprets acculturation as "the contact and resulting
change that occurs when two cultures come into direct contact with each other" (p. 4).
The cultural contact between the two self-reliant groups is one of continuous first-hand
experience (Hartse, 1994; Herskovits, 1938, Sills, 1972; Woods, 1975). The
contact can be physical or symbolic, or can be, "through trade, invasion, enslavement,
educational or missionary activity or through telecommunications" (Padilla, 1980, p.
11).

When two cultures meet, conflict is probable, and individual or group adaptation
may be inevitable (Padilla, 1980). The subsequent changes in the original cultural
structure may involve the total reorganization of one or both groups within a short
period of time (Kottak, 1991; Sills, 1972; Wood, 1975). As an example Sharp
(1952) in his manuscript *Steel Axes for Stone-age Australians*, discusses how the
introduction of the steel-hatchet by the missionaries at the beginning of the twentieth
century altered the whole social structure of Yir-Yorunt society. The tool influenced the relationship between family members, altered their system of economic exchange, and consequently endangered their world view. When a dominant society is dictating or forcing the changes in a subordinate society, the process of change can last a lifetime (Sills, 1972).

Pannabecker (1986) explains the development of the concept of acculturation as follows:

Although the term "acculturation" has been traced to the late nineteenth century, the appointment of a study committee on acculturation in 1935 by the Social Science Research council was a major indication of the growing interest in the phenomenon in the U.S. (p. 13)

The committee was composed of Robert Redfield, Ralph Linton, and Melville J. Herskovits (three prominent American anthropologists) who set the goal of clarifying the meaning of the concept of acculturation. This goal was met by studying existing research on acculturation, classifying these studies, and by proposing a technique for analyzing acculturation data (Pannabecker,1986).

Researchers have different views on whether acculturation can be considered a theory. Pannabecker (1986) suggests that "as theory, acculturation theory varies from application to application and is theory only in the garden-variety sense..." (p. 24). Contrary to this belief, Padilla (1980) thoroughly explains and describes a theory of acculturation by delineating the standard steps cultural contact follows and describing varieties of acculturation.
Padilla's Process of Acculturation

Padilla (1980) divides the acculturation process into three phases: contact, conflict, and adaptation. He describes contact as being of a physical or symbolic nature, occurring through trade, invasion, education, evangelization and settlement. The second phase, conflict, occurs "in the case of some degree of resistance, but common experience shows that groups do not lightly give up valued features of their culture" (p. 11). Lastly, adaptation alludes to the different options or manners in which cultures change to reduce or stabilize conflict. Thus for acculturation to occur, contact is imperative, conflict is likely, and some manner of adaptation is unavoidable (Padilla, 1980, p. 11).

The varieties of acculturation or adaptation in relation to the dominant society are divided into positive acculturation (where assimilation and integration occur) and negative acculturation (that results in rejection and deculturation). In the positive mode of adaptation, assimilation involves "relinquishing cultural identity and moving into the larger society" (Padilla, 1980, p. 13). In contrast, with integration, the group in contact retains cultural identity yet still moves to become part of the dominant society. In the negative variety of adaptation, rejection "refers to self-imposed withdrawal from the larger society" (Padilla, 1980, p. 13). Deculturation is when groups do not have psychological or cultural contact with either the traditional culture or the dominant society.

Padilla (1980) proposes the importance of two elements that will connect the participants of an acculturation process, cultural awareness and ethnic loyalty. Cultural awareness alludes to the individual's understanding of particular cultural elements (e.g. language, values, food, music, etc.) of the cultural group of origin. Ethnic loyalty is "the individual's preference of one cultural orientation over the other"

**Acculturation Research**

The study of acculturation is a phenomenon from the cultural anthropology discipline, where "studies of `social change' or `acculturation' are abundant" (Kottak, 1991, p. 407). Examples of studies in this area include change in women's economic roles among Micmac women of the Great Lakes Native Americans (Pannabecker, 1986, p. 32), the role of culture and ethnicity among the Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans in the United States (Padilla, 1980), the mutual influences of Mbuti `pygmy' culture and that of horticultural villagers in the forests of Zaire (Kottak, 1991, p. 407), the intrusion and subsequent dominance of Spain in Mexico from 1500 to 1800 (Hartse, 1994; Sills, 1972; Woods, 1975), and the change in social meaning of dress among the Kalabari of Nigeria after British contact (Eicher & Erekosima, 1980; Mead & Penderson, 1995). However, the phenomenon of acculturation is not only applicable in social norms, cultural customs, traditions, and roles. It can also be seen in behavioral patterns such as the manner of dress.

**Acculturation and Clothing**

Clothing is a major aspect in the study of the material culture or goods of a society (Schwarz, 1979). Cerny (1989) states:

scholars consider dress as a medium of communication, understood as a universal human phenomenon but interpreted through consideration and social context (p. 11).
In accordance with Cerny, Schwarz (1979) believes clothing plays a symbolic role in the partnership between man, nature, and the socio-cultural environment. He states that "clothes do more than just indicate a person's sex, age, occupation, and position in a social hierarchy..." (p. 28), but through clothing, individuals address themselves, their fellows, and their world (p. 31). Due to its potential to communicate the past, display the present, and tell us about the future (Gurel, 1979), clothing has become one of the mediums frequently examined by anthropologists in their cultural studies (Gurel, 1979). Clothing is a popular topic because all peoples use some form of dress. Besides studying the actual clothing of a group, if not available, dress can be studied from paintings, pottery, decorations, statuary, photographs, journals, and other types of material culture (Gurel, 1979).

The study of clothing in relation to cultural groups is not exclusive to the field of anthropology. In the field of textiles and clothing, the concept of acculturation through clothing has been examined in a range of studies. Pannabecker (1986) used the concept of acculturation to study the ribbonwork of the Great Lakes Indians, which "flowered as a unique regional expression of Indian aesthetics" (p. 1). Schwarz (1979) described how the Guambianos, inhabitants of the western slopes of the central cordillera (mountain range) in southwestern Colombia, have adapted through the centuries to Spanish influence, still maintaining much of their native culture, including their distinctive mode of dress. Another study examined how the unique style of the Cuna people's dress (molas) of the San Blas Islands in Panama was developed after contact with Panamanians and the arrival of new and different materials (Salvador, 1977). In the analysis of the clothing of Wisconsin Potawatomi Indians, Miller (1979) explains:
...one can determine changes in form, meaning, and function of elements of Potawatomi dress over time, and can examine the influence of various non-Indian groups affecting these various changes (p. 313).

In a study with particular relevance to the present one, Anawalt (1992) illustrates the effect of acculturation on dress by examining a group of Mexican costumes. The clothing indicates the clash of the Old World, Europe, and the New World, Mesoamerica, with the melding of these opposite civilizations as the final result. Seven acculturative principles are discussed in Anawalt's (1992) study: (1) Replacement, (2) Adaptation, (3) Persistence, (4) Introduction, (5) Innovation, (6) Mimicry and (7) Survival. As an example of replacement, Anawalt (1992) states:

The conquering Spaniards viewed the women's clothing as adequate but the men's pre-Hispanic apparel was not deemed acceptable. As a result, a change of male dress was mandated... The [accepted] garments were long-sleeved shirts, *camisas*, and pantaloons, *calzones* (p. 207).

The next five acculturation principles are defined as follows. Adaptation is the gradual adjustment of a garment style to social conditions. Persistence is the continuity of a clothing item despite historical changes and social pressures. The fourth principle, Introduction, brings a foreign garment into a costume repertoire for the first time in order to fill a new need. Innovation is the carrying out of a task in a completely new manner; in the case of clothing, utilizing new motifs and techniques. The copying of an original garment style or design motif is Mimicry (Anawalt, 1992).
The last acculturation principle, Survival, is best exemplified in Femenías' (1984) research of Peruvian costume in the eighteenth century, in which acknowledgment is made concerning the influence of the Iberians on Andean costumes during a complicated restructuring in Andean society. New designs, styles, and techniques for the creation of clothing were components of the new innovations brought by the Spanish (Femenías, 1984). Even with the overwhelming influence of the Spanish in Peru, the Andean people battled against complete acculturation. The researcher states:

Faced with such an emphatic deterrent, the fact that Andean peoples have continued to wear and weave garments in the old styles is a tribute to the tenacity of their ancient cultural traditions (Femenías, 1984, p. 62).

As a reflection of acculturation, Erekosima and Eicher (1994) analyzed the dress of the Kalabari men of Nigeria by using the cultural authentication approach. Cultural authentication process is defined as the transformation of borrowed objects or ideas to indigenous, cultural usages (Erekosima & Eicher, 1994, p. 185; Mead & Penderson, 1995, p. 431). The process is composed of four steps: selection, characterization, incorporation, and transformation. Selection refers to when a new object or idea to that culture is singled out or selected. Characterization occurs when symbolic meaning is attached to the new object or idea from the contacting culture. The adoption of an original object or idea with new symbolic meaning and identified as part
of that social group is known as incorporation. Finally, transformation occurs when the object or idea has been modified to such an extent that it is no longer perceived as borrowed.

In the case of Puerto Rico, acculturation has happened twice: first in the sixteenth century between the Tainos and the arriving Spanish, and second, in 1898 between the Puerto Ricans and the Americans, due to the Spanish-American War.

Acculturation in Puerto Rico

With the arrival of the United States in 1898, as in 1493 when the Spanish arrived to Puerto Rico, adjustments had to be made by the inhabitants of Puerto Rico to a new language, new customs, and new traditions (Cripps Samoiloff, 1984). As Fernández Mendez (1973) said, "the year 1898 is the starting point of a new era in the cultural history of Puerto Rico" (p. 610). The cultural changes in Puerto Rico that resulted from the contact between American and Puerto Rican cultures transformed this island from a simple, poor, agricultural state to one of the most intricate, wealthy, industrial territories in Latin America. The impact of the United States on Puerto Rico was made dramatically evident when Puerto Rico became a territory of the United States (Métraux, 1952).

To what degree did acculturation or Americanization occur within Puerto Rican culture? To answer this question an understanding of the American plan for Puerto Rico is necessary. In the opinion of Métraux (1952),

The Americans, unhindered by rebellion and overt opposition, set themselves to the task of transforming Puerto Rico. They were persuaded that they had brought with them "the advantages and blessings of enlightened civilization" and
were bound ultimately to give to the Puerto Ricans the American way of life which implied the application of those methods that have resulted in the success of the American nation (p. 62).

The Americans were received cordially and enthusiastically by Puerto Ricans who were overtly empathetic with their cause, thus allowing the U.S. to immediately put its plan into progress (Wagenheim, 1975). Over the years Puerto Rico has been transformed by contact with the U. S. in: (a) government, (b) education, (c) commerce, (d) industry, (e) transportation, (f) religion, and (g) social aspects (Fernández Mendez, 1973).

An example of government change was the installation of a civilian (American) government in place of the military one. By 1948, Puerto Ricans were able to elect a governor for the first time (Scarano, 1993).

In education, English became the official language in the classroom. This lasted until 1949, when Spanish returned to its original status. In the schools, maps were of the United States and charts noted chief events in American, not Puerto Rican history (Fernández García, 1923). The number of schools around the island tripled and in 1903, the University of Puerto Rico was founded (Scarano, 1993).

Agricultural commerce with the United States had been very important to Puerto Rico during the nineteenth century. In particular the importation of sugar and molasses, from which the U.S. received one-fourth of its produce (Scarano, 1993, p. 470). Yet, after 1898, trade between the United States and Puerto Rico increased dramatically. In 1896, U.S. imports totaled $1,506,512 and exports totaled $1,833,544 (Morris, 1899, p. 221), compared to 1913 when U.S. imports were
valued at $33,155,005 and exports equaled $40,536,623 (Boyce, 1914, p. 406). In the agricultural sector, Puerto Rico was importing all types of produce such as wheat flour, rice, beef, corn flour, beans, and potatoes (Scarano, 1993, p. 596). In less than three years, American merchandise monopolized the island markets. In 1901 almost $8 out of every $10 of imported merchandise sold in Puerto Rico was from the United States. By 1914, U. S. imports increased to $9 out of every $10 (Scarano, 1993, p. 596).

In industry, the production of sugar became the number one priority in agriculture with la industria de la aguja (the manufacturing of embroidered cotton textiles) and tobacco following (Industry in Puerto Rico, 1967). The system of production also changed "from the period of family-style haciendas to that of corporate land combines" (Cripps Samoiloff, 1984, p. 106).

In transportation, the opening of roads and railroads throughout the island connected all the island's people. Gone were the days of isolation across the country (Cripps Samoiloff, 1984; Fernández García, 1923). In religion, America's entry brought all forms of Protestantism. During the Spanish regime, the Catholic church had not allowed Protestants on the island (Cripps Samoiloff, 1984; Fernández García, 1923).

Cultural transformation seen in the social aspects in Puerto Rico varied in its rate of change. Sometimes change occurred slowly. Other times Puerto Ricans accepted change quickly, "almost subconsciously" as they imitated American patterns (Métraux, 1952). For example, baseball was accepted with euphoria, the eight-hour work day was adopted and the siesta (afternoon rest period) abandoned, and concrete houses replaced wooden shacks. U.S. influence was seen also in the introduction of movies,
family festivals celebrated with the American ones, and the introduction later in the century of "American type shopping centers" (Cripps Samoilloff, 1984).

Even with all these changes, the family still remained the important center for most Puerto Rican individuals (Cripps Samoilloff, 1984); a tradition surviving from the Taino indians. Yet the roles played by women were modified to a certain extent at the turn of the century. "Women had greater opportunities for economic activities outside the home" (Métraux, 1952, p. 74), particularly in the areas of manufacturing for the working class and education or health services for middle or higher classes (Scarano, 1993, p. 651). The Puerto Rican woman, who had been kept illiterate and in ignorance ever since the Spanish Conquest, “emerged from her seclusion and ceased to be merely a decorative social figure,...” (Enciclopedia Ilustrada Puertorriqueña, 1970, p. 194). Still, “they took greater care with their physical beauty and attractiveness...” (Enciclopedia Ilustrada Puertorriqueña, 1970, p. 146).

Puerto Rican Women and Dress

Elements of Puerto Rican women’s world developed from the different cultures, Tainos, African, Spanish, and American, which have intermingled throughout the island’s history. These elements include religious beliefs, position or role in the family structure, and form of dress, to name a few. Writer Isabel Motta de Ramery in Fernández García (1923) described Puerto Rican women as follows:

Puerto Rican women, like violets, perfume the surrounding atmosphere from their homes. They are the soul of society and possess simplicity that is enchanting....Puerto Rican women are culture, well educated, home loving and devoted to music and art. (p. 819)
In 1899, an American writer who attended an aristocratic ball had this to say about the Puerto Rican woman:

"I venture you have never seen a prettier sight. They are straight and slender and everyone is a brunette....They keep up the dance throughout the evening....Every girl had a fan which she kept always in motion. She fans herself three times and then with a twist of the wrist throws the fold of the fan together. Another twist and it is open in the opposite way and she is fanning herself most coquetishly" (Cripps Samoiloff, 1984, p. 101).

Although these descriptions make Puerto Rican women seem frivolous and fragile, and yes, "most Puerto Rican women want to look pretty, feminine, and pleasing to their men." (Cripps Samoiloff, 1984, p. 167), the women should not be stereotyped as just homemakers or docile wives. With the economic and social changes brought on by contact with the U.S., women received many new opportunities, such as attending the university and earning a degree. This can be seen in the university enrollment between 1903 and 1923, when three out of four students were women (Scarano, 1993). One woman who exemplifies the role of the new Puerto Rican woman was Felisa "Doña Fela" Rincón, who expresses Puerto Rican womanhood through a mixture of the old, Spanish past, and the new, American present (Oliveira, 1981, p. 49).

Rincón was born in 1897 to a small well-to-do family. She learned what every girl in society needed-- to sew, to dance, and the coquettish art of fan language. Yet, not only was she interested in the typical female activities, she played baseball, and was interested in politics, pharmacy, and helping the needy. Due to her mother's early
death, Rincón could not finish college. She became more involved in politics and volunteering services. She lived in New York for a while, in the garment district, and later returned to Puerto Rico to open her own style shop (Oliveira, 1981).

Rincon's involvement in politics took her all the way to being the first female mayor of San Juan, a position she held for 22 years. During this time, Doña Fela kept her flamboyant charm. "Every new occasion was met with a switch in hairpiece or with a flowing gown she'd designed herself" (Oliveira, 1981, p. 52).

Doña Fela was not the only one with a passion for clothes. Among the women of the island, there has always prevailed a great interest in dress. Puerto Rican women love clothes and a great deal of money, when available, went into the purchasing of clothing (Cripps Samoiloff, 1984). Even middle or lower class women found a way to supplement their wardrobes (Diaz Alcaide, 1993, p. 92).

Fashion was so important to Puerto Rican women that sometimes it overrode other social considerations. For example, when French fashion in the eighteenth century dictated the low, round neckline, the Catholic church considered it too low for decent women. Still, the women used the excuse of the climate as the reason for the low neckline and it worked! The woman of Puerto Rico could still wear the revealing fashions and not be thrown out of the church (Babin, 1958, p. 145; Diaz Alcaide, 1993, p. 95).

Puerto Rican women's love for fashion may have been manifested during the Spanish era (Diaz Alcaide, 1993, p. 93) or perhaps was inherited from the Taina indians (Diaz Alcaide, 1993, p. 93). According to Hamm (1899), their tastes and habits are a combination of Spanish culture, French influences, and the tropical climate (p. 154). These preferences concerning fashion can be detected from the wide variety
of items imported into the island in the 1890s, such as woolens, laces, embroideries, fans, perfumery, cosmetics, boots, shoes, linens, watches, jewelry, ribbons, umbrellas, parasols, and cotton goods (Hamm, 1899, p. 152). The taste for fine materials and for cotton goods such as prints, calico\(^1\), and muslin helps support their love for fashion (Diaz Alcaide, 1993; Hamm, 1899). When it comes to adornment, the mantilla (lace head scarf), of Spanish descent, was commonly worn to church. Additionally, the fan was part of the social equipment. The mantilla and fan, however, are seldom seen today (Cripps Samoiloff, 1984). Yet, still most women wear earrings and nearly all baby girls have their ears pierced early.

From the seventeenth century on, information on women's fashion came to Puerto Rico in fashion journals and fashion plates that would trickle slowly from the European continent (Babin, 1958, p. 145). Through the late nineteenth century, high society in Puerto Rico would follow the fashion trends of Paris and Madrid. Fashion journals from France were sometimes translated into Spanish (Santaliz, 1985, p. 22). From Madrid, Puerto Rican women could receive the fashion news from *El Salón de la Moda*, a biweekly journal edited and published in Spain. It contained illustrations and fashion plates of the French fashions of the time. In addition, it had sewing patterns, and needlepoint and crochet designs for women to follow.

When the Americans arrived in 1898 new trends in dress appeared, but were said to have not been welcomed immediately (Diaz Alcaide, 1993). However, the American influence in the twentieth-century brought socio-economic changes and Puerto Rican women's lifestyles changed abruptly. Gone where the days of illiteracy, ignorance, and seclusion supposedly typical of their lifestyle under the Spanish regime

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\(^1\)See Appendix E for definitions of underlined fashion terms.
(Enciclopedia Ilustrada Puertorriqueña, 1970, p. 194). Suddenly women's opportunity for education was more accessible and they took it, thus "preparing themselves for the intellectual work which was to be the basis for their economic independence, for their emancipation" (Enciclopedia Ilustrada Puertorriqueña, 1970, p. 189). With their new education, women cornered the teaching market, became nurses, organized civic groups and became involved in the suffragist movement (Acosta-Belén, 1980, p. 276; Enciclopedia Ilustrada Puertorriqueña, 1970, p. 195).

Diaz Alcaide (1993) states:

> The Puerto Rican woman would go out to the street. She would become an important figure in production and because of this, gained the right to a more practical and simple dress...which she adored (p. 110).

This revolution in dress paralleled new norms in Puerto Rico's social and economic lifestyles of the twentieth century. These new norms were a reflection of the cultural changes that Puerto Rico had been experiencing since 1898, a date which connotes the saying "out with the old, in with the new." The old signifies the Spaniard, the new symbolizes the American.

> Given the importance of fashion to Puerto Rican women, how did they use their appearance and form of dress to communicate the new economic, social, and cultural changes brought about by American sovereignty in the island?

**Structure of Appearance and Dress**

Appearance has been defined as the outward impression or aspect of a person or thing (Guralnik, 1984). Hillestad (1980) recognizes appearance to be a significant
aspect of culture which "involves the human body as well the coverings and embellishments placed upon it" (p. 117).

As an integral part of appearance, clothing serves as a transmitter of social signals and distinct components of a culture (McCracken, 1988; Morris, 1979). Clothes can provide information concerning an individual's status, age, gender, class, occupation, marital status, religion, and politics (Hunt, 1990; McCracken, 1988). Clothes can also provide information such as the groups to which people belong, as well as the general state of the society (Hunt, 1990).

Roach-Higgins and Eicher (1992) define dress as "an assemblage of modifications of the body and/or supplements to the body" (p. 1). Likewise Hillestad (1980) interprets dress as "the result of assembling various articles (clothing or adornment) about the body" (p. 117). Each article of dress is associated with a specific function. Articles of clothing are associated specifically with comfort and protection (Morris, 1979; Hillestad, 1980). On the other hand, articles of adornment tend to function as decoration and ornamentation (Hillestad, 1980). "Sometimes an article of clothing or an article of adornment figures so greatly in the configuration of dress that it becomes the identifying characteristic of dress" (Hillestad, 1980, p. 118). An example of this phenomenon could be related to the mantilla. This style of headwear, identifiable with Spanish dress and influenced by Spanish culture, is universally common to woman's dress in Latin American countries. Thus, the mantilla distinguishes the Hispanic nature of a region or country.

Form is an integral part in the configuration of dress and adornment (Hillestad, 1994). "Form is the shape that materials take after human beings have modified and transformed them through techniques to meet needs, satisfy desires, fulfill functions,
or accommodate whims" (Hillestad, 1994, p. 80). When visually analyzing dress or costume, form is utilized in "the organization of details" (DeLong, 1968, p. 785). The organization of details can be divided into "uni-form" and "multi-form" (DeLong, 1968; Hillestad, 1980). In the uni-form costume, details are generally similar, giving the perception of one visual part or unit (DeLong, 1968). Opposite to visualizing one unit, the effects of multi-form details give the impression of different parts. The garment or dress is not viewed as a whole, but as a composition of different units (DeLong, 1968).

The details or visual definers in the form are identified as "those layout and surface aspects that characterize the part- these are line, shape, point, texture, and color" (DeLong, 1968, p. 72). Similarly, Hillestad (1980), notes the components of form as silhouette, color, texture, and pattern.

**Analysis of Clothing**

Applying the theoretical perspective of appearance structure, Schwarz (1979) analyzed the clothing of both male and female Guambianos of Colombia in order to define social structure. By looking at different visual definers (e.g. shape, design, pattern, etc.) of the costumes, Schwarz (1979) deciphered how their dualism relates to their societal structure. In studies conducted by Femenías (1994), Salvador (1977), and Zorn (1994), visual definers in clothing, such as color and length of a skirt, were analyzed as they relate to cultural identity. Also, Hunt and Sibley (1994) explored the styles of clothing worn by African American women living in Georgia between 1890 and 1914 by analyzing elements of dress. The present study analyzes elements of Puerto Rican women's dress for comparison with the elements of U.S. women's dress of the period.
Characteristics of U. S. dress for the period of 1895-1920

The “progression” of American clothing is neither linear nor confined to the dynamic interaction of fashion (taste or desire) and technology (possibility and availability); rather, American clothing—like our language, system of government, and multifaceted culture—issues from many roots, and it flowers in response to a variety of conditions, both individual and cultural (Hall, 1992, p. 2).

In the years preceding the Civil War, it was seen the beginnings of an “American idiom” in dress (Hall, 1992, p. 42). With the industrial revolution, inventions and technological advances influenced both materials and styles of clothing available in the U.S. (Hall, 1992, p. 42). American fashion was centered in New York (Milbank, 1989, p. 8) and included both home-stitched clothing and manufactured clothing. The New York stores along with the fashion magazines based in New York, informed the rest of America about what was in fashion. “New York didn’t copy Paris, it used it” (Milbank, 1989, p. 10). What was actually available in the stores to buy were store made versions of French fashions interpreted into an American style. “Paris dresses were rarely copied faithfully;...” (Milbank, 1989, p. 10) and had someone wished to copy, it would have been difficult since fashion plates rarely gave any information about the materials or techniques used in the illustrated design (Milbank, 1989, p. 19).

This is not to say that European fashions were completely out of the American scene. The richer Americans, to parade their wealth, still wore European fashions, in particular French fashions (Hall, 1992, p. 42; Milbank, 1989, p. 8).
As the American middle classes grew wealthier, fashion became the communicator of their new status (Milbank, 1989, p. 16). By the mid-nineteenth century, women were spending more time outside their homes, traveled more, had more opportunities for education, worked outside the home, and become more physically active (Milbank, 1989, p. 16). With their new roles in society, American women began to establish a preference for simpler clothes, such as shorter skirts for walking, and jackets and/or shirtwaists and skirts for all day wear. Simplicity became an element of American fashion and style and was epitomized in the late 1890s and early 1900s by the Gibson Girl look (Milbank, 1989, p. 13).

Immortalized by artist Charles Dana Gibson, The Gibson Girl (see Figure 2.1) became the ideal (modern) American woman of the turn of the century. Her looks and dress not only became immensely popular in the U. S., but also in the international scene (Yarwood, 1978, p. 196). Also known as the shirtwaist girl, she was illustrated wearing a tailored white linen blouse with Ascot tie, a dark, tailored skirt with small, belted waist and a hat perched on a pompadour hairstyle (Yarwood, 1980, p. 113). If illustrated in an outdoors setting, the Gibson girl was often shown wearing a jacket, straw hat and gloves (Yarwood, 1978, p. 196).

The new century brought radical transformations to American women's lives. As the prejudice against women attending colleges declined, more and more acquired education and entered into the professional job market (Milbank, 1989, p. 46). Adding to the American woman's new lifestyle was the breakout of the First World War in 1914, whereupon women had to take up traditionally male jobs (Milbank, 1989, p. 46). All of these changes gave a new independent reputation to the American woman. This independent reputation became the hallmark of U. S. fashion style in the first two
decades of the twentieth century (Milbank, 1989, p. 46). Fashion reflected new professionalism, prioritizing the working woman’s needs for simple, unrestrictive clothing that could be worn all day (Milbank, 1989, p. 48). The major changes in American women’s lives culminated in the 1920s with the right to vote and the flapper girl, with her short bobbed hair and boyish looks.

Following is a more detailed description of American women’s dress between 1895-1920. This review provides a basis for comparison with the elements of dress of Puerto Rican women that were studied. The structure of appearance and dress for the American woman of 1895-1920 is described and analyzed by silhouette, bodice, sleeve,
skirt, footwear, headwear, and accessories. The twenty-five year time frame is divided into the three periods which the study is organized: 1895-1898, 1899-1917, and 1918-1920.

1895 - 1898

The prevailing silhouette of the 1890s was the hourglass (see Figure 2.2), based on a narrow waist, a flared, plain gored skirt, and a blouse with sleeves puffed high at the shoulder (Milbank, 1989, p. 44). The bodice fastened in the front and was fitted with very high collars (Arnold, 1977; Payne, 1965). It was trimmed with revers or to create a yoke or cross-over V-shape on the front (Hunt, 1990). In addition drapery, gathered fronts, or separate plastrons were also fashionable. The bodices were usually waist-length with round or slightly pointed waistlines (Tortora & Eubank, 1989; Waugh, 1968). These large-sleeved bodices were covered with bands of ribbon tied in bows, ruffles of lace, embroidery, and other frills which followed the line of the sleeves across the bodice (Milbank, 1989, p. 44). The tucked full-sleeved blouse might be constructed of sateen or percale of stripes, flowers, or dots on dark backgrounds. Dalrymple (1991) sees the only way for a woman to escape from the high, boned, collar was when wearing evening dresses. These tended to have low necklines, trains, and were made of opulent and bright colored fabrics (p. 91). Shirtwaists (see Figure 2.3) were a popular informal bodice. They were tailored like a man's shirt, had leg-of-mutton sleeves, and were mainly worn with contrasting color skirts. A popular style was the black-and-white or blue-and -white striped shirtwaist. In addition, many of these blouses had detachable collars and cuffs
(Worrell, 1974, p. 131). By the end of the 1890s the blouses and bodices were beginning to be bloused into the waistband of the skirt, hinting at a future silhouette (Milbank, 1989, p. 45).

In 1895 (see Figure 2.2 a, b, c) the sleeve was at its climax of exaggerated fullness in the leg-of-mutton, balloon, or gigot shapes (Dalrymple, 1991, p. 91; Milbank, 1989, p. 44). "The leg-of-mutton was a long sleeve with fullness at the upper half and fitted below. The balloon sleeve was a short, full puff. The gigot was full from shoulder to wrist" (Hunt, 1990, p. 48). A variety of frills and ruffles often decorated the shoulder and elbows of the sleeves to emphasize their fullness (Worrell, 1979, p. 131). By 1897 (see Figure 2.2 d, f) the fullness of the sleeves started to
decrease, and epaulets and very exaggerated wide collars now provided the focal point (Dalrymple, 1991, p. 91).

Skirts were flat at the waist and spread out gradually toward the ground with fullness at the sides and back in large pleats (Worrell, 1979, p. 131). Sometimes skirts were longer in the back than in the front and were advertised as having a “four and a half yard sweep” (Worrell, 1979, p. 131). Other skirts such as the “walking skirt” were ankle length, some having been documented to be three or four inches off the floor (Hunt, 1990; Worrell, 1979, p. 131). Skirts were often made out of plaid, dotted, checked, striped or jacquard fabric. They might also be constructed out of taffeta, moiré, or wool (Worrell, 1979, p. 131). By the end of the decade, skirts were narrower and very slim over the hips, but still swirled at the hemline (Dalrymple, 1991, p. 91).
Other garments beside the shirtwaist and skirt combination were popular with American women in the mid to late 1890s. These garments were the tailor-made suit (see Figure 2.4) and the lingerie dress (Milbank, 1989, p. 40/42). Suits fulfilled a variety of needs, such as walking, golfing, office work, and all casual occasions (Milbank, 1989, p. 40; Worrell, 1979, p. 132). The tailor-mades of the 1890s were a combination of a three-fourth length jackets, with wide revers and enormous sleeves, a plain skirt (to the instep or ground length), and sometimes a waistcoat (Nunn, 1984, p. 159). They would be worn with tucked and very high-necked blouses to which sometimes a woman would add a tie (Worrell, 1979, p. 132). For summer sports or leisure activities, women wore lingerie dresses. Such a name was given to this “white skirt and white blouse” outfit, because it was “made of various plain or patterned cottons and linens and ornamented with such underwear trimmings as ruffles, ribbon beading, bows, embroideries, and lace” (Milbank, 1989, p. 42). These enormously popular dresses were ornamental and practical, and widely available in ready-to-wear and custom-made versions (Milbank, 1989, p. 45).

The bonnet, a carry-over from earlier in the century, could still be seen in the 1890s, but it was starting to lose some of its popularity (Nunn, 1984, p. 160; Worrell, 1979, p. 131). Hats ranged from large straw hats (for the garden), and straw boaters for sports and leisure activities, to flat sailors and plain Trilbys for everyday wear (Payne, 1965; Worrell, 1979, p. 132). The Trilby hats and men’s homburgs were worn with a ribbon band around the crown as decoration (Payne, 1965). The flat sailors were worn at the front of the head. They were decorated with feathers, ribbons, flowers, plumes, tulle, lace, buckles and beads (Worrell, 1979, p. 132). By the end of the decade hats were becoming wider-brimmed and overdecorated,
worn high on the head over the fuller hairstyle (Nunn, 1984, p. 160).

These fuller hairstyles were described as “parted in the middle and puffed out at the sides before being twisted into a bun at the back” (Worrell, 1979, p. 131), on top of the head (Nunn, 1984, p. 159). This mode of styling the hair is what later became known as the “pompadour” hairstyle.

Shoes had very pointed toes or slightly rounded ones with medium high heels. The vamp was cut high and they buttoned or laced up the front. Shoes and slippers were sometimes ornamented with buckles and high tongues or small bows. Close-fitting boots rose to calf-length. Common summer shoes were white oxfords (Nunn, 1984, p. 161). Other popular accessories included stockings with embroidery or lace insertions at the instep (Nunn, 1984, p. 161); wide belts of alligator, seal, black silk, patent leather, or gross-grain with silver or jeweled buckles (Worrell, 1979, p. 131); chatelaine bags, decorative hair combs or hair pins, small earrings, brooches, bracelets, rings, and pin-up watches, as well as short white gloves, fans, umbrellas and parasols (Nunn, 1984, p. 166-167).

1899 - 1917

Beginning in 1900 the S-silhouette or S-shape curve dominated fashion. This mode of dressing was followed by the Empire style and the Princess look in 1909 (Milbank, 1989, p. 52), and the triangular or pear-shaped for the last couple of years of the period 1899-1917 (Ewing, 1992; Tortora & Eubank, 1989; Waugh, 1968). Milbank (1989) gives a description of the S-silhouette, “dressed in a shirtwaist and skirt or in two-piece dresses, the corseted female figure, with her bodice bloused over her waistline and her skirt gathered in back over a slightly protruding rear end, resembled in profile the letter S” (p. 50). The Empire style was characterized by the
bodice joined to the skirt with a high waistline that fell just below the bust (Nunn, 1984, p. 185). The Princess look or dress was described as “a one-piece paneled or gored fitted dress with a flare skirt” (Milbank, 1989, p. 52). In the triangular or pear-shaped, the fullness was concentrated at the bottom of the skirt with a slightly above natural waist (Milbank, 1989, p. 56; Nunn, 1984, p. 187).

Women’s clothing of the early 1900s S-silhouette (see Figure 2.5) favored the mature figure, with a corseted waist, full bosom, ample hips and posterior (Nunn, 1984, p. 169). The bodice or shirtwaist (see Figure 2.6) had front fullness or blousing which gave it a looser appearance, pouching over the waistline which is known as “pouter-pigeon blousing” (Milbank, 1989, p. 51). Collars continued to be high standing and were supported by hidden silk-covered wire, thus bringing attention to the shoulders and neck (Worrell, 1979, p. 146). Prevalent trimmings on the bodice included: velvet, lace, tiny tucks, ruffles, flounces, insertions, silk trellis work, fagoting, appliqué and embroidery (Nunn, 1984, p. 185). These trimmings could be found all over the shirtwaist, including the collar and sleeves. Because of the dominant amount of lace, embroidery, and other trimmings on the shirtwaist, Cohn (1940) described it as “almost as elaborate as a baroque church” (p. 294). The shirts were available in different fabrics, from lawn, taffeta, organdy and sateen, to nun’s veiling, linen, flannel, velvet and silk (Cohn, 1940, p. 294). White was considered the most suitable color for the shirtwaist (Nunn, 1984, p. 185). Worn either with or without a jacket, the shirtwaist was at the height of popularity during this period of 1899 to 1912 (Cohn, 1940, p. 294; Nunn, 1984, p. 185).
In the early 1900s the sleeve was very long and plain. Later the fullness of the sleeve would increase below the elbow, gathering into a wrist band or cuff (Nunn, 1984, p. 184). For 1905 there was a brief revival of the full upper sleeve, which came in the form of ruffled wings over the shoulders (Nunn, 1984, p. 184; Waugh, 1968).

Bolero jackets were worn or bodices were detailed with trim to create the curved hemline of the bolero which helped to emphasize the low, full, bustline fashionable at the time (Nunn, 1984, p. 184; Waugh, 1968).

The join between bodice and skirt was usually concealed by a belt or a shaped or draped waistband, cut to a point at the front and sloping up to a narrow band at the back,
thus emphasizing the S-curve (Nunn, 1984, p. 185). Skirts had a flat front, were gathered at the center back, and gored to fit closely around the hips, flaring toward the hem in circular flounces with just a slight train. Another manner in which this skirt silhouette could be achieved was by stitching down pleats to knee level and then allowing the fabric to flow free, or by adding a deep flounce around the hem (Nunn, 1984, p. 185). By 1909, straighter skirts started to show up in fashion (Nunn, 1984, p. 185). Many skirts of the period were just plain gores without decoration of any kind but having the fashionable silhouette (Worrell, 1979, p. 146). However, sometimes flared flounces would be added to the gored skirts (Worrell, 1979, p. 147) and other skirts were tucked, ruffled, flounced, or decorated with lace frills. Additionally, they were embellished with pleats, decorative stitching, and braid (Boucher, 1987; Tortora & Eubank, 1989; Waugh, 1968).

Formal gowns were often of sheer fabrics and lace in delicate colors. Still, the bosom curved out of the waist making woman's posture appear swaybacked (Worrell, 1979, p. 146). The gowns had low necklines and scanty sleeves (Milbank, 1989, p. 50). These necklines could be square, round or V-shaped, and were softened with a bertha collar or a fichu in sheer fabric. Sometimes the shoulders might be exposed, with just a strap to support the bodice (Nunn, 1984, p. 185). The sleeves ranged from a flounced ruffle to a puffed sleeve made out of transparent material (Nunn, 1984, p. 185). For the formal or evening gowns, flimsy materials were used over silk and satin skirts, which frequently trailed with a frilled and flounced hemline (Nunn, 1984, p. 185). For evening and receptions, the gown's skirt just grazed the ground and had a very long train (Milbank, 1989, p. 50; Worrell, 1979, p. 146).

Tailored suits became the proper ensemble to wear for a woman's club meeting
or any daytime affair (Worrell, 1979, p. 147). “Tailored suits were commonly seen in the full bodice [jacket] and fitted skirt which flared out at the ground” (Hunt, 1990, p. 50). The jackets were either short and fitted or long and loose, like a man’s sack coat (Tortora & Eubank, 1989). Made of wool or moiré, these ensembles were often embellished with satin, velvet, or braid (Worrell, 1979, p. 147). In 1905, “it was considered chic not to wear color in the street” (Milbank, 1989, p. 53), this notion was reflected in women’s suits which had a color palette of black, tan, black-and-white pin-stripe, dark blue, gray, or brown. Black was a favorite color for trim (Worrell, 1979, p. 147).

For the summer, many women wore tailor-mades out of linen (Milbank, 1989, p. 48). Even with this new summer clothing choice, lingerie dresses (see Figure 2.5) continued to be extremely popular. These white, cotton or linen garments with lace, tucks, white-on-white embroidery and ruffles were representative of Edwardian fashion. This fashion was characterized by dresses made of soft, light, “clinging” and “semi-transparent” materials (i.e. chiffon, lawn, muslin, faille, crepe de chine) combined with lots of white lace. The color palette included tender and delicate pastels such as blue, green, lilac, and cream (Steele, 1985, p. 218; Worrell, 1979, p. 146). In contrast to these “frothy” fashions, another very common dress of the time was the all black garment with lots of tucks, and a brooch or cameo at the neck (Worrell, 1979, p. 146).

With the Empire style (see Figure 2.7) and the Princess look (see Figure 2.8) that emerged in 1909, the silhouette moved away from the full-monobosom, hourglass waistline and two piece dresses that had been popular in the early 1900s (Milbank,
1989, p. 52). One-piece dresses increased in popularity (Nunn, 1984, p. 185). Not only was there a decrease in bodice fullness, but there was a rise of the waistline and the length of the skirt. This rise in the waistline lasted until 1915 for daytime, and until 1918 for evening, before returning to the natural waist (Nunn, 1984, p. 187). Yet, even though the silhouette of this period became straighter and narrower, it was still considered curvy (Milbank, 1989, p. 52).

Daytime necklines during this period were lower and included round, V-shapes, bateau, low square with an inserted panel, and wide bertha (Hunt, 1990; Milbank, 1989, p. 54; Nunn, 1984, p. 187). Necklines were usually trimmed with a collar. With the raised waistline, the sleeve underarm seam went directly from the belt with
extra fullness pleated in (i.e. kimono sleeve) (Worrell, 1979, p. 162). Other smooth fitting sleeves popular to the period were close fitting elbow or wrist length sleeves (Boucher, 1987; Tortora & Eubank, 1989; Waugh, 1968).

The skirts of these one-piece dresses went through quite a few phases. They first were narrower than the previous fashion, often with drape or overskirt effects (see Figure 2.9). The skirt's length was shortened to instep level (Nunn, 1984, p. 187, Worrell, 1979, p. 162). Then later in this time period came the "hobble skirt," called that because it was so narrow that it was difficult for women to walk (see Figure 2.10). Out of the hobble skirt came a more practical narrow skirt. This skirt often featured buttons at the hem, which could be undone for walking (Milbank, 1989, p. 54). Also popular during this time period was the peg-top skirt that was constructed wider in the hips by means of drapery or tunic and then narrowed at the ankles (Nunn, 1984, p. 187).

During this time period, suit jackets lengthened, and dresses with jackets made an appearance. For the summer these garments were popular in linen, lawn and Irish crochet (Milbank, 1989, p. 52).

Through 1910 and 1911, black and white color schemes dominated fashion, however other colors were popular including cerise, coral pink, violet, and sapphire (Milbank, 1989, p. 54). Although the empire or princess-styled one piece dresses were most prominent, the shirtdress was still worn. The shirtdress became the "peasant blouse," made of soft materials like gauze, crepe de chine or silk chiffon. It sometimes was embroidered at the front and down the sleeves (Milbank, 1989, p. 52). By 1914, the shirtdress was worn outside the skirt like a tunic (Milbank, 1989,
Figure 2.9: Early 1910s formal gown with overskirt. From *American costume: 1840-1920* (p. 162), E. A. Worrell, 1979, Harrisburg, Pa: Stackpole Books.

Figure 2.10: Early 1910s version of the “hobble” skirt. From *American costume: 1840-1920* (p. 163), E. A. Worrell, 1979, Harrisburg, Pa: Stackpole Books.

By the end of the time period 1899-1917, a less confining silhouette—triangular or pear shape—had already made its appearance, becoming associated with World War I (Milbank, 1989, p. 56).

The triangular or pear-shape that appeared in 1916 was exemplified by the chemise dress (see Figure 2.11). The dress had a high waist and its hemline was at the top of the boots (Worrell, 1979, p. 164). An overdress was often part of the chemise, with one, two, or three tiers. Lace was used in many of these dresses and combined with different materials including serge for morning, velvet for afternoon, and satin and lace for evening. Some chemise dresses were made out of cotton (Worrell, 1979, p. 156). This shape was also seen in above the ankle flared skirts worn with hip-length jackets.
or cardigan sweaters with wide, unfitted belts (Milbank, 1989, p. 56). The pear-shaped skirt of 1916-1917 achieved its fullness through pleating, gathering, gores, tiers, and flounces (Tortora & Eubank, 1989; Waugh, 1968). The length of this skirt ranged from six up to eight inches above the ground, falling somewhere between the calf and the ankle (Tortora & Eubank, 1989; Waugh, 1968; Ewing, 1992). Other examples of the pear-shaped silhouette were reflected in the suits of the time. These clothing ensembles were influenced by men’s fashions, a common style was the Norfolk suit (see Figure 2.12). It had lapels and an open collar (Worrell, 1979, p. 164) and was worn with a button-up, stock tie or frilly jabot blouse. A man’s tie could be added for a more tailored look. Popular colors were blue, orchid rose, and nile green. Oyster
white colored was fashionable for dressy suits. For summer linen was preferred, while for casual wear dark, checked, or khaki fabrics were preferred (Worrell, 1979, p. 164).

During the S-shape silhouette at the beginning of the twentieth century, hats had large flat brims that were curled and cocked into many shapes (Worrell, 1979, p. 147). The hats were heavily trimmed with feathers, flowers, ribbons, tulle, and bird wings. The hats were often worn tilted forward over the face (Boucher, 1987; Tortora & Eubank, 1989). When traveling in a car, women would wear veils to protect their faces from the dust and dirt. The veils were made from sheer silk inset with a lace panel for the face or mesh work with chenille dots or embroidered patterns. The veils were worn over the hat and around the face beekeeper style (Milbank, 1989, p. 52). The hats of this period were complemented by hairstyles which were “high, full, and loose around the face, pulled into a chignon or bun at the nape of the neck” (Hunt, 1990, p. 51). Another popular hairstyle was a pompadour coiffure in which the “hair was pushed toward the face and then doubled back to the crown where it was twisted into a bun. It was teased and coaxed into soft waves. Little curls often encircled the face and hung at the nape of the neck” (Worrell, 1979, p. 146).

With the Empire style and Princess look at the end of the 1900s, headwear emphasized height and width with extensively decorated short crowns. The enormous wide brimmed hat was worn straight, tilted back, or towards the side. This style of hat was trimmed with flowers, ribbons, or feathers, and was held in place by long hat pins (Nunn, 1984, p. 195; Worrell, 1979, p. 162). This fashion lasted until 1913 when hats started to diminish in size and toques, tam-o-shanters, berets, and deeper closer fitting crowned and brimmed hats became fashionable (Nunn, 1984, p. 195). Evening
headwear varied from tulle bows in 1908, to turbans, bandeaux or forehead bands, to
the occasional feather (Nunn, 1984, p. 196). To complement the hats, hairstyles were
less bouffant with soft waves around the face and the fullness at the side pulled back
over the ears in a bun or coil worn lower at the back (Nunn, 1984, p. 195; Worrell,
1979, p. 162). Peroxide was used for the first time for bleaching hair during this
period (Worrell, 1979, p. 162). With the emergence of the pear-shape silhouette
during the mid 1910s, hats had the appearance of flower pots (Worrell, 1979, p.
163). With these smaller hats, the hair was gathered into a low-ponytail or was cut
short into a “bob” (Nunn, 1984, p. 195; Worrell, 1979, p. 164).

At the turn of the twentieth century, footwear consisted of shoes with pointed
toes and 2 to 2-1/2” high curved Louis heels (Boucher, 1987; Tortora & Eubank,
1989). Boots, which laced or buttoned to above the ankle or had gaiters, had Cuban
heels, about 1-1/2 inches high (Milbank, 1989, p. 52). In 1905 silk stockings were
a luxury, the more common hosiery was black cotton or lace stockings (Cohn, 1940, p.
355). With the Empire style and Princess look shoes continued to be Louis pumps with
2 to 2-1/2 inch heels. By 1910 pumps with straps and slippers with buckles
increased in popularity while boots became less fashionable (Worrell, 1979, p. 162).
The new slippers were worn with dark stockings, some of which had embroidered or
beaded designs on them (Worrell, 1979, p. 162). Even though shoes were more visible
with the shorter hemlines of the pear-shape silhouette, they did not change radically
until later in the 1910s (Tortora & Eubank, 1989). Because of World War I, puttees
became fashionable for women, who put them over their oxfords (Worrell, 1979, p.
164).
When it comes to accessories, by 1905, lace and silk parasols were almost always part of the woman's standard outfit. "They were frilly and sometimes silly but they were feminine and the women of that day,... wore them everywhere in Spring and Summer" (Cohn, 1940, p. 292). Accessories common during the Empire and Princess silhouettes included the fur or feather boa and fur scarves and collars (Worrell, 1979, p. 162). Small clutch purses with a strap or chain were popular (Worrell, 1979, p. 163). Additionally, long white kid gloves, umbrellas (not parasols), and ostrich fans were common (Worrell, 1979, p. 163) not only with these silhouettes but also with the pear-shape of the mid 1910s.

Jewelry during this period of 1899-1917, included oblong or round pins, pendants suspended in festoon from a chain with the center pendant the longest, dog collars, long necklaces, and fresh flower sprays, with the S-silhouette (Milbank, 1989, p. 52). With the Empire, Princess, and pear-shape silhouettes, designs of jewelry with an Oriental flair were very much in vogue (Nunn, 1984, p. 205).

1918 - 1920

During this time frame the triangular or pear-shape look was still seen but the tubular or barrel-shape silhouette (see Figure 2.13) became the dominant style of 1918-1920 (Ewing, 1992; Tortora & Eubank, 1989; Waugh, 1968). In the tubular shape, a narrow skirt and looser natural waistline dominated, giving a more straight up and down appearance (Milbank, 1989, p. 56; Nunn, 1984, p. 187).

Shirt-type blouses were typically worn with skirts and suits (Tortora & Eubank, 1989; Waugh, 1968). General features included raglan sleeves and long narrow revers, Medici, or standing collars with open, round, or square necklines (Tortora & Eubank, 1989; Waugh, 1968). The dress bodice area had a natural
shoulder fit with long, straight fitted sleeves or kimono style sleeves (Tortora & Eubank, 1989; Waugh, 1968). These bodices or bodice areas were matched up with an ankle length tubular/straight skirt (Tortora & Eubank, 1989). This silhouette is

Figure 2.13: 1917-1918 tubular or barrel silhouette suits and dresses. From Historic costume: a resumé of style and fashion from remote times to the nineteen-sixties (p. 245), by K. M. Lester & R. N. Kerr, 1956, Peoria, Ill: Chas A. Bennett Co., Inc.

exemplified by the jumper dress. The jumper dress was a jumper blouse worn with a matching skirt (Nunn, 1984, p. 187). The jumper blouse was belted or unbelted, and had a knitted pull-over blouse; it replaced the tunic (Nunn, 1984, p. 187).

Hats were rather high either with wide brims or with no brims at all. Large flat-brimmed hats with square crowns were commonly worn; some had hatbands, while others were embellished with flowers and plumes (Worrell, 1979, p. 164). By the end of the decade, knitted cloches and stocking caps were common (Worrell, 1979, p. 165). Two hairstyles prevailed during this time. In the first, "the hair was teased and
frizzed with the curling iron so that it appeared very wavy and thick. It was pushed toward the face and then pulled to the back and fastened with a large bow (Worrell, 1979, p. 164). The second style was a short bobbed cut, about ear level, worn waved or curled (Nunn, 1984, p. 195).

In footwear, pumps with Louis heels were the norm. These could have a strap, bow or buckle. By the end of the period, shoes had become very pointed, with straps over the instep (Worrell, 1979, p. 165).

In jewelry, long ropes of pearls, amber, jade, and other semi-precious stones were seen (Waugh, 1968). Other accessories were the parasol, feather fan, walking stick, and lace wrap (Mulvagh, 1988).

Summary

This review of literature provides a substantial basis for the present study. A brief history of Puerto Rico was provided. The theoretical concept of cultural contact (i.e. acculturation) was reviewed and analyzed and related to the use of the concept for studying clothing in many cultures. Additionally, acculturation was discussed with regard to Puerto Rican culture.

The section on Puerto Rican women and their love for clothing added to a base of knowledge useful for understanding why these women might adopt elements of fashionable U.S. dress. The section on elements of fashionable U.S. dress, detailing the fashion characteristics between 1895 - 1920, paved the path for a thorough investigation of acculturation as it occurred in Puerto Rican women's dress.

Looking at fashion elements from the U.S., and whether they were adopted in women's clothing in Puerto Rico, provides understanding of influence of cultural contact on material culture. Puerto Ricans were euphoric about the Americans when they first
arrived and embraced many of the changes brought with them. Yet when it came to
dress, Diaz Alcaide (1993) acknowledged the arrival of American fashions to Puerto
Rico after 1898 and the unfriendly welcome they received from the Puerto Ricans (p.
110). Thus, by determining the extent to which Puerto Rican women adopted elements
of U. S. dress, the degree of acculturation incorporated into one of the most prominent
material artifacts of Puerto Rico is revealed.
CHAPTER 3
PROCEDURE

The purpose of this research was to examine Puerto Rican women’s dress between 1895 through 1920, to determine if U.S. fashions influenced the island’s manner of dress after the American takeover in 1898. A descriptive historical survey was conducted in order to understand Puerto Rican woman’s fashion and if any changes occurred in fashion during the time that could be attributed to U. S. influence. Primary sources, including historical photographs, books, periodicals, and extant garments were analyzed to investigate the Puerto Rican’s form of dress. This chapter describes the procedures used in the research and includes sections addressing: a) identification of Puerto Rican primary data sources, b) classification of the primary sources, c) the data collection procedure where the elements of dress of the Puerto Rican woman were recorded, and d) data analysis for determining acculturation.

Identification of Puerto Rican Primary Data Sources

The sources of data for the research were acquired from libraries, museums and cultural institutes, and family albums in Puerto Rico. The selection of the institutions for the study was based on the quality and quantity of primary sources such as photographs, books, periodicals, and garments of Puerto Rican women between 1895 to 1920 included in their holdings.

In preliminary phases of the research, a tentative list of institutions in Puerto
Rico with holdings related to the study was developed. The list was generated by
surveying indexes and directories of universities, libraries, museums, and other
research institutions in Puerto Rico. Information such as the address, telephone
number, specialization of the institution, and other pertinent facts was learned from
the indexes and directories. The process helped in the preliminary selection of
institutions most useful to the investigation. Appendix A outlines the preliminary list
of institutions that included such establishments as the Ateneo Puertorriqueño, Archivo
General de Puerto Rico, Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, Caribbean and Latin
American Studies Library, Carnegie Public Library, University of Puerto Rico Library
System, Public Library Services (Department of Education), and Centro de Estudios
Avanzados de Puerto Rico y el Caribe Biblioteca. After the initial list was developed,
preliminary research conducted in Puerto Rico during December 1995 helped narrow
the list down to those institutions with the largest holdings suitable for the
investigation (see Appendix B). Particularly, the selection of institutions was
determined by their quality and quantity of resources (periodicals, photographs, books)
dealing with Puerto Rican women and women’s fashions of the time.

Quality and quantity of appropriate photographs were very important deciding
factors because the research was based on these images. The collected images of Puerto
Rican women from 1895-1920 brought to light a detailed account of the fashionable
dress; data that were used to answer the research questions. To support data collected
from analyzing the photographs, primary sources such as books and periodicals
provided additional data for the process of understanding the Puerto Rican fashions. One
of the purposes for using these types of data sources was to fill in for aspects of dress
that were not visible. For example, footwear worn by the Puerto Rican women in the
1895-1898 period was impossible to deduce because of the long skirts fashionable at the time. Contemporary books provide descriptions of women's footwear. Additionally, books and periodicals provided an understanding of the culture of Puerto Rico during the time period.

Some institutions on the preliminary list of possible data sources were not included for the final data collection phase because they lacked the appropriate type and quality of sources. For example, the Carnegie Public Library was not useful because its holdings were primarily contemporary materials. On the other hand, the Ateneo Puertorriqueño, La Colección Puertorriqueña of the University of Puerto Rico, and the Archivo General de Puerto Rico had extensive resources of photographs, books, and magazines. As a consequence of the preliminary research in Puerto Rico other institutions, including the Museo de Arte de Ponce, the Museo de la Historia de Ponce, and the Biblioteca General, were added to the list of primary sources due to their large holdings of historical photographs, garments, and/or periodicals and books. Last but not least, historical photographs containing Puerto Rican women were acquired from the Tomasini Gómez family album. These women are family members (my great-grandmother, a great aunt, and others) whose photographs were taken within the time period of 1895-1920 in Puerto Rico.

From the preliminary research conducted in December 1995 in Puerto Rico, a final list of informational sources was compiled for data collection in the Summer of 1996.

Classification of Primary Sources

Once the institutions were selected, rules were established for inclusion of individual sources from the collections. Photographs of women in Puerto Rico were the
major source of information for the investigation. These visual images provided an insight into the apparel and overall appearance of the Puerto Rican woman at the turn of the century. Photographs fitting into the time period of 1895 through 1920 were selected. The preference was for already dated pictures, but in cases where they were not dated or may have been incorrectly dated, the researcher established a date for the photographs based on costume knowledge and similar clothing seen in dated photos. These photographs were selected from archival collections, books and magazines published between 1895 and 1920, and private family albums.

Since the study involved the analysis of Puerto Rican women’s dress between 1895-1920, the photographs had to include or be of adult women. The subjects in the photographs were assumed to be Puerto Rican, based on their looks or the Spanish name or location of the picture. Fortunately, there were instances in which assumptions were not needed, because the subjects were specifically identified as Puerto Rican. Generally the adult and young-adult Puerto Rican women included in the photos, were of the more affluent classes (i.e. high or high-middle class). This knowledge was possible when information (name, city, occasion) concerning the women in the photographs was available. Of course there were instances in which information was not available, and due to the situation, location, and the physical appearance of the women assumptions were made concerning their social status. Additionally, these affluent women would have been more likely to have the resources to purchase or keep up with fashion, thus, any changes due to U.S. influence would be visible in their manner of dress.

To understand better the fashions worn by the Puerto Rican women of 1895-1920 through photographs, more complete images were better. Thus, photographs that included images of a standing figure or three quarters of the figure were the main
source of data. There were exceptions to this rule. For example, in many portrait style photos, where the image was from the waist up, the skirt and footwear were not visible. But if the details of the bodice, hairstyle, and any aspect of dress incorporated in this area were visually definable, then the image was accepted as part of the data. The conditions of the photographs had to be clear enough to conduct the dress analysis. In photographs where there were multiple women, the quality of the photo, the number of women, and the dominant look became factors. For example, if only one of three women were visible, then obviously only the clear one was analyzed. In the case where all were visible, depending on how many women (10 or less), then the clearest images were analyzed. In large groups of women (more than 10), a survey of the dominant styles was recorded.

When using books and periodicals as supporting data, first and foremost they had to be written within the time frame (1895-1920) studied. These primary sources discussed or described Puerto Rican women, their lifestyle and fashion, and sometimes contained useful photographs or illustrations that were also included as part of the study. The majority of the books were based on observations of visiting Americans—reporters, travelers, scholars, and military men during 1898 and 1899. In some occasions, some of the writers had visited Puerto Rico prior to that time as well, adding to their credibility and knowledge of the island and its population. I included only those books that seemed to provide an unbiased, objective, look at Puerto Rico and its people. Thus, certain publications that were found to be very opinionated and even condescending toward Puerto Rico were not used because they lacked objectivity.

Puerto Rican periodicals dating from 1895-1920 used as primary data sources included weekly magazines, such as 

Gráfico, and Puerto Rico Ilustrado and periodicals
just for women such as *La Revista Blanca* and *El Carnaval*. These magazines provided information on a variety of topics including literature, science, art, fashion, Puerto Rican society, and current events. Very useful to the research were the photographs of Puerto Rican women published in the periodicals *Gráfico* and *Puerto Rico Ilustrado*. These images showed in detail the full garments worn by the ladies of the island, and in many instances included the name of the wearer, her town of residence, and the occasion of the photograph. This information was particularly useful since the majority of the time these kinds of details were not available with the photographs acquired from museums or archives. In addition, many of these periodicals contained advertisements for clothing stores, fabric stores, etc. Some of the advertisements included details of the garments, accessories, or fabrics that they sold. Many included the country of origin of their merchandise (i.e. Spain, France, U.S.). Additionally, advertisements for stores in the United States were observed in the Puerto Rican periodicals. These stores were not only inviting the Puerto Ricans to visit their location when in the U.S., but also provided information on how to get their mail-order catalogue. Overall, the periodicals became a great source of visual and written information for the research.

The desire to use existent garments of Puerto Rican women of 1895-1920 was fulfilled to an extent. A single garment in good condition was found in the *Museo de la Historia de Ponce*. However, this garment of black silk satin, embellished with velvet, rhinestones and cording was not used in the final research because there were many questions hovering over it. Some of these questions included the date of garment, circa 1899, and the accessory (hat) matched with the garment, circa 1940s. Originally the garment was considered to be a key item for the study, particularly because the researcher was not sure how much data (photographs, book, etc.) were going to be
available. But, since the amount of photographs, books, and periodicals of the time exceeded the expectations, and because of the feeling of uncertainty concerning the garment, the existent dress was not used in the final analysis of this research.

Recording the Elements of Dress

A data collection form was developed by the researcher to standardize the process of analyzing the visual images of the Puerto Rican women in the study and to provide a way of organizing the data. The form focused on characteristics of clothing and appearance including silhouette, headwear, hairstyle, bodice, neckline/collar, waistline, skirt, hosiery, footwear, jewelry, accessories (gloves, parasols, fans, purses), fabric, color and ornamentation (see Appendix C). This form was used to record all costume characteristics observed in the photographs and garments examined.

Archival information (if available) was recorded, including archive or accession number for photographs or garments, the date and location of its production, the photographer or photographic studio responsible for the photo, and any other pertinent information that helped designate the sources. For periodicals or books, information such as the name or title of the work and the author or editor was listed, as well as the published date, location, publishing house, and any other facts. As a way to have the chosen data sources readily available for later examination, whenever possible, photocopies or photograph prints were made. As part of the data collection, any ads and textual information concerning any of the photographs, etc. of the Puerto Rican women were also recorded and were used when analyzing the data.

Comparison of Fashionable Dress to Identify Acculturation

The data were categorized into three time periods: 1895-1898 (pre-American takeover; under Spanish regime), 1899-1917 (Spanish-American war through U.S
citizenship to Puerto Ricans), and 1918-1920 (post-citizenship and Americanization in full swing). The first time period, 1895-1898, was prior to the American takeover while Puerto Rico was still under Spanish regime. It was assumed that U.S. fashion influence would be minimal in Puerto Rico during this period. The period from 1899-1917 included the Spanish-American war and the subsequent granting of U.S. citizenship to Puerto Ricans. In this period of transition and increased American domination on the island, it was expected that U.S. aspects of fashion would be more prevalent. The 1918-1920 period reflected post-citizenship when Americanization was in full swing. During this period there was also extensive migration of Puerto Ricans to the American mainland and therefore increased opportunities for influence of U.S. tastes. Thus, it was expected that American fashions would be widespread on the island due to direct contact and easy access to the U.S.

Once the data were divided into the three time periods, 1895-1898, 1899-1917, and 1918-1920, an analysis of the dress worn by the women in the pictures was conducted. The analysis was based on the aspects of dress defined on the data collection form including silhouette, hairstyle, headwear, jewelry, collar/neckline, sleeves, bodice, waistline, skirt, hosiery, footwear, accessories, ornamentation, and color/fabric. The analyzed data were organized within the time periods by aspect of dress. By grouping the aspects of dress together, patterns or commonalities in dress were observed. Concluding from these patterns, a general fashion for the Puerto Rican women of the given time period was defined.

Once an understanding of the general appearance of the Puerto Rican women of 1895-1920 was delineated, a comparison was made with the clothing elements of the United States. As seen in the review of literature, the costume characteristics for the
United States were compiled from a variety of general costume books and ones particular to American clothing. The information of American fashion in concordance with the data analyzed for the Puerto Rican women was compared based on the three time periods of 1895-1898, 1899-1917, 1918-1920. The comparisons were conducted by looking at the aspects of dress for both the U.S. and Puerto Rico. Similarities and differences in dress were noted, including the lack of or appearance of a particular aspect of dress from one of the groups, the popularity of a certain form of dress, as well as the time of popularity. For example, to define a certain aspect of Puerto Rican dress as unique (i.e. long chain necklace with folding fan), the constant appearance of the item in the photographs through all the years became the key in deciding its uniqueness.

The conclusions of the research were based on a thorough understanding of the fashions of Puerto Rican women during 1895-1920. The research questions were answered and conclusions were drawn regarding the extent acculturation played in Puerto Rican women's clothing of 1895-1920.
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

The objective of this study was to determine the process and extent to which acculturation impacted Puerto Rican women's clothing between the years 1895-1920. This was accomplished by understanding the cultural setting of these Hispanic women and examining photographs and garments of the period in question. In this chapter the results are presented and discussed in two sections: a) Puerto Rican women's culture and society in the 1890s and 1900s—social class, social life, education, and opportunities for learning about fashion, and b) Puerto Rican women's fashions of 1895-1898, 1899-1917, and 1918-1920— including observations of aspects of dress such as silhouette, headwear, hairstyle, jewelry, collar and neckline, bodice, waistline, skirt, hosiery and footwear, accessories, ornamentation, and fabric and color; supplemental information on Puerto Rican women's dress; and a comparison of fashionable appearance between the U.S. and Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rican Women's Culture and Society

Many races and nationalities have contributed to the make-up of the population in Puerto Rico, thus making for a diverse society. As part of the U.S. Geological survey team in Puerto Rico after the Spanish-American War in 1898, Robert Hill observed how the Puerto Rican population of the late 1890s was composed of Spaniards and their descendants - the higher class, at the top of a hierarchical social structure, followed by

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the *jíbaros* - lower class peasantry, the *mestizos*, and the inhabitants of African descent (Hill, 1898, p. 166). The Puerto Rican Spaniards of the upper class included professionals involved in commerce and agriculture. These higher classes of people kept strictly to their own society (White, 1898, p. 357). Hill (1898) and Charles Morris (1899) described the ladies\(^2\) of this class as handsome, refined, amiable in disposition, and strictly secluded as in other Spanish countries (p. 166; p. 205). From his observations and research during his second visit to Puerto Rico in 1898, Frederick Ober (1899) viewed the physical appearance of the Puerto Rican woman as:

> the type [beauty] here is also that of Spain, the mother country. Brunettes prevail and blondes are a rarity. The large eyes, black as night; the peachblow complexion; hair abundant, dark and glossy as a raven’s wing; gracefully moulded, voluptuous form- these attributes of Spanish beauty have not changed during all the 300 years of Spanish domination (p. 173).

But it was not only American observers that were captivated with these Latin ladies, as Ober (1899) found out while analyzing written material during his visit, even writers from Spain viewed them as:

> sweet and amiable, faithful as wives, loving as sisters, sweethearts, and daughters, ornaments to any society in the world, tasteful in dress, tactful in conversation, graceful in deportment, and extremely elegant in their

\(^2\) The term ladies, rather than women, is used because it better reflects Puerto Rican women’s oppressed social status during the late 1890s and early 1900s.
carriage....their resemblance to the beautiful doncellas of Cadiz (p. 174-175).

Just as Frederick Ober, Margherita Hamm took a second trip to Puerto Rico in 1898. In her case, the trip coincided with the on-going Spanish-American War. While visiting the island, she came to characterize the ladies of Puerto Rico as:

gentle, polite, affectionate and hospitable. They are inquisitive, talkative, nervous and excitable, they love social diversions and all amusements which they are permitted to attend, and they dote on flirting (Hamm, 1899, p. 133).

In the two months William Dinwiddie spent in Puerto Rico after the U.S. takeover, he had the opportunity to speak with a variety of people from the island, including business men and politicians. From these interviews and observations, he gained a complete picture of the “industrial, commercial, political, and social conditions existing on that island today” (Dinwiddie, 1899, p. iii). An example of social life viewed by Dinwiddie during his stay in Puerto Rico was the “extremely simple” home-life of the well-to-do. This was manifested through the Puerto Rican households, which were sparsely decorated, with bare floors, and few of the items for the home which Americans would have considered quite essential to their lifestyle (Dinwiddie, 1899, p. 147). Dinwiddie suggests that the limited use of home furnishings was due largely to excessive tariffs on imported merchandise and the lack of transportation facilities and good roads to move products across the island. But even with their simple home-life, the well-to-do in Puerto Rico followed French fashions and the English lifestyle. According to some observers, the ladies of the higher classes dressed in Parisian styles, although these styles would usually be a year or two old by
the time they reached Puerto Rico (Hill, 1899, p. 166; Morris, 1899, p. 205). The French mode of dress could be followed through fashion journals such as *El Salón de la Moda*, a biweekly journal edited and published in Spain, which contained French illustrations and fashion plates. In the meantime, the Puerto Rican males indulged in the traditionally British activities of hunting, fishing, fencing, tennis, steeple chasing, and cricket (Hamm, 1899, p. 98).

Spanish social customs also prevailed on the island in the late 1890s (Bryan, 1899, p. 383). In Ober’s (1899) words “scratch a Puerto Rican and you find a Spaniard underneath the skin, so the language and home customs of Spain prevail here,...” (p. 168). Like other Latin American societies of the time, Puerto Rican colonial society during the period of Spanish rule was a patriarchal, paternalistic, and military-oriented society. With this type of culture came an almost absolute subordination of women to men (Acosta-Belén, 1986, p. 3). The condition of women in Puerto Rico at the end of the nineteenth century was one of an inferior status. If the woman was unmarried, the social rule that “little children must be seen and not heard” also applied to them (Hamm, 1899, p. 131). Another example was seen at the dinner table, where guests and males were placed in the seats considered most honorable, while the women were all grouped at less distinguished seats of the table (Dinwiddie, 1899, p. 153). Hamm (1899) interpreted the relationship between men and women of the island:

> the men treat women with exquisite courtesy, both in speech and action. They foresee every want, and they bestow attention with tact and delicacy, but it is the master pleasing the slave, and not one human being treating his equal (p. 99).
The city of San Juan, in 1897, was a bustling city, full of life and inhabitants. The life of the Puerto Rican women of the middle and upper-classes was essentially secluded and conducted inside the home (Bryan, 1899, p. 353; Hamm, 1899, p. 121; Morris, 1899, p. 205; Ober, 1899, p. 169). As a newspaper correspondent for The Evening Post during the months of August, September, and October 1898, Albert Robinson (1899) noted this seclusion by “the absence from the streets [cities and towns] and stores of ladies whose apparel and demeanor would indicate them as of well-to-do families” (p. 57). The seclusion of women was attributed to Spanish heritage, education, and habits, as well as a lethargy produced by the climate, where staying indoors was preferred to many physical activities.

The effect of the weather is understandable when considering that the climate of Puerto Rico is hot and humid all year around. In the summer the high temperature averages 95° F, with cooler temperature at night. In the winter the high temperature averages 80° F, with much cooler readings at night. However, 65°F was considered cold by Puerto Ricans (Dinwiddie, 1899, p. 16/17). An aspect making the climate difficult in Puerto Rico is the excessively high humidity, particularly during the April/May rainy season (Dinwiddie, 1899, p. 16/17). As a result, certain aspects in the life of a Puerto Rican, such as clothing and physical activities, tended to be affected by the warm climate.

Two activities Puerto Rican women did participate in, however, were riding and dancing (Hamm, 1899, p. 121). The latter was an activity that was enjoyed by every man, woman, and child from every social class in Puerto Rico. The fashionable would favor the dance styles in vogue in Paris, while the large middle classes went for the bolero, fandango, and other dances more typical to their Spanish heritage (Hamm,
1899, p. 98). Although she was allowed to attend dances, and even a bullfight, the
Puerto Rican woman could not attend a cockfight in a public cockpit (Hamm, 1899, p.
133). She was allowed to attend the opera and theater, but not vaudeville performances
(Hamm, 1899, p. 133).

A Puerto Rican woman could not go out alone without losing status and being
insulted. To attend social activities, she needed an escort, who could be her father,
grandfather, uncle, brother, son, or else a hired elderly female companion or duenna
(Hamm, 1899, p. 128). She could not receive visitors alone; not even her fiancé
(Hamm, 1899, p. 100). Other restrictions to a woman’s conduct in society included
not being able to participate in hunting, shooting, rowing, sailing, camping, or
entomological or botanical expeditions. Through the mid 1890s, the women were not
permitted to use the bicycle. However, this prejudice was eventually relaxed due to the
examples from other countries, and Puerto Rican women were seen around the island on
American and European wheels (Hamm, 1899, p. 134). Additionally, the women could
go to the beaches, where separate sections had been set aside for them, and they could
bathe without masculine intrusion (Ribes Tovar, 1972, p. 182).

Another feature of a Puerto Rican woman’s social life was the attendance of
musical concerts at the plaza or public square (Hamm, 1899, p. 115). Referred to by
Robinson (1899) as “Sunday promenade on the plaza” (p. 53), these once a week
performances became a type of dress parade for the better class of Puerto Rican women
(Bryan, 1899, p. 263; Robinson, 1899, p. 53).

As well as being restrained in their social life, at the end of the nineteenth
century, the educational level of women in Puerto Rico was described as “pitiably
behind.” An observer in 1898 recounts how 75% of middle class women were
illiterate; the higher classes had similar levels of literacy (Hamm, 1899, p. 132).

Dinwiddie (1899) stated how “one never sees a book or a magazine in these houses [well-to-do], though in two or three of the larger cities there are many literary men. Reading is not a strong point of the island population” (p. 153). This notion of a lack of reading is supported by Robinson (1899) who stated the “Porto Rican generally are not a reading people” (p. 188). However, this generalization obscured the fact that some well-bred Puerto Rican women had a reading knowledge of French, and sometimes Italian (Hamm, 1899, p. 131). This knowledge was achieved through the home teachings of governesses or tutors (Bryan, 1899, p. 383). The reading material could be found in printing offices and book shops across the island, or the public library in San Juan (Robinson, 1899, p. 187; White, 1898, p. 401). The bookshops mainly carried books in Spanish and French that were imported from Madrid, Barcelona, and Paris. But books written in English could also be found in the 1890s, in particular in the city of Ponce where there resided a local representative for the New York house of the Appletons (White, 1898, p. 401). The book’s topics ranged from Spanish and French novels to volumes of statistical reports and history (Robinson, 1899, p. 188). In contrast to the books found in Puerto Rico, the newspapers and periodicals of the island were described by the American Trumbull White during his 1898 visit as “very disappointing....[they] have high sounding names, but they are little folio sheets... devoted in most part to one long editorial and a few personals “ (White, 1898, p. 443).

Besides their formal education with a governess or tutor, many Puerto Rican women displayed more informal achievements in the 1890s. Nearly every woman played an instrument and sang. Some painted and drew, while others made lace, embroidered, or crocheted. Other activities Puerto Rican women excelled in were
floriculture, fruit culture, herbaria, and cultivation of aquariums (Hamm, 1899, p. 131). In addition, the well-to-do Puerto Rican woman was described by Dinwiddie (1899) as being far more assiduous in her interest in household economy than her sisters of other Spanish-speaking territories of North America (p. 153).

The lifestyle of many Puerto Rican women was challenged as a consequence of the insurgent movement in Puerto Rico against the Spanish government in 1895. Because of this political uprising against the rulers of the island, many of the suspects and their families fled the island to the U.S., Mexico, or Peru. The Puerto Rican women exiled in New York “had the chance to observe at close range the more active life and freer ways of American women” (Ribes Tovar, 1972, p. 182). The American girl was independent, practical, and matter-of-fact, which contrasted with the Puerto Rican woman who was secluded, exotic, and traditional. William Bryan (1899) suggested that education played a key part in the difference between the women of the North and the islands (p. 383-384). The lack of education for the women of Puerto Rico throughout the three hundred and fifty years of Spanish colonial rule had resulted in an absence of a feminist consciousness or movement (Acosta-Belén, 1986, p. 3). The “bourgeois spirit” that characterized France and the U.S., had not developed in the Puerto Rican woman (Hamm, 1899, p. 138). During the 1890s in Puerto Rico there was an obvious absence of the “grisette and shop-girl class, and of women professors, doctors, lawyers, dentists, typewrites and bookkeepers” (Hamm, 1899, p. 138). Not only were women not employed in stores, but not until 1900 were there female typists in the island (Bryan, 1899, p. 303). As a consequence of the lack of “bourgeois spirit” within the general female population in Puerto Rico, positions such as nurses, invalid’s companions, readers, preceptors, book agents, art critics, garden directors, and
advisors in household economics were held by members of the religious sisterhood (Hamm, 1899, p. 138).

The position of the Puerto Rican women was to change in the early 1900s under U.S. rule. During the first decades of the twentieth century the main concern of urban Puerto Rican women was to achieve an education. Acquiring an education paved the way to apply for intellectual work, such as teaching, which would be the basis for their economic independence (Ribes Tovar, 1972, p. 187). This desire for education was reflected in an increase in the number of schools and number of students in attendance on the island. In 1899, immediately after the U. S. takeover of Puerto Rico, there were 528 public schools with an attendance of 18,243. By 1914, the island’s schools had multiplied to 3,000 with an attendance of 118,000 (Boyce, 1914, p. 439). Another opportunity for Puerto Rican women's self-improvement stemmed from the great migration to the mainland that occurred when the U. S. granted citizenship to Puerto Ricans in 1917. There were many new opportunities for advancement for the women who stayed on the island (Ribes Tovar, 1972, p. 188).

Yet while some Puerto Rican women tried to improve their positions and roles in society during the early 1900s, others on the island sought for this not to happen. As an example, at the end of the nineteenth century Puerto Rican liberals succeeded in obtaining guarantees of constitutional rights from the short-lived Spanish republic. Puerto Rican women viewed this as an opportunity to improve their own rights, but the conservatives kept them in a state of subjugation. One of the ways in which this was accomplished was through the press which carried a subtle campaign against the rights for women with poems extolling the nobility of their life in the home, their beauty and other topics (Ribes Tovar, 1972, p. 181).
When speaking of Puerto Rican women, their manner of dress has been characterized as lacking a particular native style, with not much difference to the manner of dress of the Western hemisphere’s developed countries (Babin, 1958, p. 142). Yet, while in Puerto Rico in the 1890s, Margherita Hamm (1899) concluded that the tastes and habits of Puerto Ricans were:

very different from those which prevail in the United States, and are largely Spanish, modified by French influences in one direction, and by the necessities of the climate in another....This principle of local taste and of habit applies to nearly all textiles, leather, articles, vehicles, perfumes, soaps, medicines, jewelry and household furnishings (p. 154).

In the following section Puerto Rican women’s fashions of 1895 through 1920 are discussed. This discussion is based on the analysis of photographs for the time frame in question, and on primary and secondary written sources. The time period is divided between 1895-1898 (pre-American takeover; under Spanish regime), 1899-1917 (Spanish-American war through U.S citizenship to Puerto Ricans), and 1918-1920 (post-citizenship and Americanization in full swing). Besides a full description of the observed fashions for each period, a discussion of pertinent topics such as available goods, stores, etc. are included whenever possible. As fashion refers to the styles worn by the majority of people during a period of time and in a particular location, the dominant look is discussed. Particular styles and appearances observed in single or minimal occasions are not discussed except when the singular appearance supports the notion of a unique Puerto Rican image.
Puerto Rican Women’s Fashions, 1895-1920

1895-1898

In a trip to Puerto Rico in 1898, Frederick Ober (1899) observed in San Juan how “the stores and shop, though some of them contain good stocks of European goods, are wholly inadequate to the needs of a modern city....few manufactures here, nearly everything being imported” (p. 161). Albert Robinson (1899) supports this observation after visiting different stores in the city of Ponce. Here he noticed how “the goods were the manufacture of different nations, a few Americans, some French, English, and German. Spain was unduly represented...” (p. 43). Dry-goods stores were a common sight in Puerto Rico in this period of Spanish rule and the shopper could buy in the same store a yard of calico or a saddle, a mantilla or a machete (Robinson, 1899, p. 173). In addition to hardware, crockery, and saddlery, these stores also carried a line of shoes and slippers (Robinson, 1899, p. 174).

Importing and exporting was big business in Puerto Rico, and there was more or less regular contact by ships from Spain, England, Cuba, Santo Domingo, St. Thomas, Martinique, Guadalupe, South America (Hill, 1898, p. 159), and New York (Morris, 1899, p. 189; Ober, 1898, p. 235). Between 1892-1895 Puerto Rico imported a total of $68,874,090.48 and exported $63,466,864.02 (Hamm, 1899, p. 150). A Spanish customs report from the 1890s accounting the goods that Puerto Rico imported from the United States listed the major ones as cotton fabrics, yarn and thread, and paper products such as stationary and books (Hamm, 1899, p. 151). The island received much smaller quantities of watches, chromo-lithographs, woolens, boots, and
shoes. So minuscule was the amount of these latter imports, that they accommodated for only one-sixth or one-seventh of the total commerce in Puerto Rico (Hamm, 1899, p. 151).

Puerto Rico also imported similar goods from other countries, as well as boots and shoes (mainly from Spain) and watches from other countries. In addition, they acquired from these nations (Spain, England, Cuba, Santo Domingo, etc.) such goods as laces, embroideries, fans, perfume, cosmetics, linens, eyeglasses, jewelry, ribbons, umbrellas, and parasols (Hamm, 1899, p. 152).

Combs and brushes were imported items found in great variety and quantity. The more popular styles from America, England and France were seen in Puerto Rican stores. Hamm (1899) found interesting the Spanish combs and brushes made from dark woods, rubber, horn, ivory, and other materials that were inlaid with mother of pearl or silver (p. 123).

Some clothing prices in Puerto Rican stores were cheaper than in the U.S., particularly garments made out of lightweight material such as linen (Bryan, 1899; p. 303; Dinwiddie, 189, p. 66). But “good” dress clothes tended to be higher priced than in the U.S. and woollen goods were quite limited (Dinwiddie, 1899, p. 66 & 75; Robinson, 1899, p. 169). Additionally, it was less expensive to buy Spanish or French made shoes on the island than to buy U.S.-made shoes (Dinwiddie, 1899, p. 66). Thus, only small quantities of shoes from American manufacturers were found in Puerto Rico during this interim political period (Robinson, 1899, p. 175).

Hill (1899) and Morris (1899) described the Puerto Rican ladies of the higher classes at the end of the nineteenth century as petite in form, with small hands and feet, and dressed in what they characterized as Parisian styles although these styles were
usually a year or two old by the time they reached Puerto Rico (p. 166; p. 205).

Additionally, the hairstyles, jewelry, shoes and los afeites (adornments) also followed Paris and Madrid (Babin, 1958, p. 147). The latter aspects of dress are supported by the literature discussed earlier concerning the type of goods imported to Puerto Rico in the 1890s.

**Puerto Rican women’s fashions, 1895-1898.** An analysis of Puerto Rican women’s fashion for the years 1895 through 1898 provides an understanding and visual image of the mode of dress for the better classes at that time. The analysis focused on the silhouette, headwear, hairstyles, jewelry, neckline and collar, sleeves, bodice, waistline, skirt, hosiery and footwear, accessories, ornamentation, and fabric and color observed in the photographs. When all these aspects are considered together, a complete appearance is made clear.

The observed silhouette of the ladies analyzed in this study is known as the bell shape or hourglass silhouette. This silhouette was characterized by an emphasis on the upper body, a very narrow waist, and a full long gored skirt. This silhouette was usually achieved with two separate garment pieces, a bodice and a skirt.

“Sunday promenade on the plaza” served as an occasion for women to parade in their handsomest and showiest attire, which could include head draperies or no headwear at all (Hamm, 1899, p. 115). The photographs studied for this period showed few examples of headwear, a situation which Margherita Hamm’s writings support. While in her travels through Puerto Rico in the 1890s, Hamm (1899) noticed the lack of hats and bonnets worn by the women of the island. Yet, even though Hamm (1899) reported the lack of this type of headwear, she described the ladies of Puerto Rico as wearing mantillas as a substitute for everyday hats. However the
photographs analyzed for 1895-1898 do not support the wearing of mantillas; no examples of this headwear were seen.

The hairstyles observed from the photographs were smooth and controlled. One of the most common manners of wearing the hair was pulled back tightly into a top knot and framing the face with curly bangs or wisps of hair. Another manner of hairstyle observed involved a looser look where the hair was swept up into a bun with more fullness. This last hairstyle was prevalent in the photographs studied from 1898. In addition, an American writer, cited by Bryan (1899), in attendance at an aristocratic ball in San Juan noticed “what beautiful hair they [Puerto Rican women] have, and what a lot of it!...How well the hair is put up! It is dressed in a knot just back of the crown, and is puffed out a la pompadour,...” (p. 383).

After a head to toe silhouette was determined, the next step in the investigation of Puerto Rican women’s fashions was a more detailed analysis of the garments. This was accomplished by systematically observing the prevalent style features of the bodice, neckline, sleeves, waistline, and skirt. The most common types of bodices seen during this time were the form fitting bodice and the shirtwaist. The waist length form fitting bodices just covered the waistband of the skirt. The bodices were embellished with either a rectangular yoke lace panel or with a bertha lace collar. In addition, center front pleating in the illusion of an open fan and V panels outlined in a ruffle were part of the decoration of the bodice. The other type of bodice worn by the Puerto Rican women during this time period was the shirtwaist. This style of bodice was more common for the last two years of the period—1897 and 1898. The shirtwaists were less frilly than the fitted bodices but they were still ornate. Their less frivolous trimmings mainly consisted of pin-tucks and small ruffles. Some had jewel necklines.
while others had band or shirt type collars. The shirtwaists were buttoned down the front, and were worn untucked or tucked into the skirt. The untucked shirtwaist "look" was seen on various ladies of the island. In these cases, the ladies were in non-formal settings such as the outdoors or on the balcony of their home, where a more relaxed manner of dressing would be acceptable (see Figure 4.1).

In contrast to the casual untucked shirtwaist "look," apparel for dinner and evening for the ladies of the island was rich and elegant. This dressy appearance is illustrated in Figure 4.2, where the "Spanish lady of Mayaguez" is wearing a bodice of silk "dotted swiss" fabric which is trimmed with a bertha lace collar, satin ribbons, and beading. The elegant and rich appearance of the evening dress's bodice was also observed by Margherita Hamm in 1898 from her attendance to a local ball. She described the apparel as:

black and white dresses which disclose the arms, shoulders, bust and back, but are lined elsewhere with white or many-colored satin, are more numerous than any other single style, and embroidered linen or silk is also in vogue. The bolero jacket, the most graceful of the articles of raiment here, is worn by nearly all the señoritas (p. 98).

With either the form fitting bodice or the shirtwaist, the neckline or collar most commonly worn in the photographs was the high band or stand collar. These collars could be found with or without decorative flowers in the back. Additionally, a popular sight was the contrasting solid color or the bodice (see Figure 4.3c). For evening apparel, the observed neckline was low-cut, as seen in the V-neckline in
Figure 4.1: "Untucked" shirtwaist look. From *Our islands and their people* (p. 269), by W. S. Bryan, 1899, St. Louis, MO: N. D. Thompson Publishing Co.
Figure 4.2: Eveningwear. From Our islands and their people (p. 322), by W. S. Bryan, 1899, St. Louis, MO: N. D. Thompson Publishing Co.
Figure 4.3: Band collar of contrasting color. *Archivo General de Puerto Rico*, # CP-2 253r.
Figure 4.2. This revealing style was also noticed by Hamm (1899) who described the young ladies of Puerto Rico as wearing “low-cut evening dresses of white silk or of black silk and velvet” (p. 67) for evening activities such as dances. Another type of evening neckline was a covered low neck, made possible by wearing a lace or neck sacque or waist to allow the skin to be seen (Hamm, 1899, p. 130). Examples of these evening necklines were observed by Hamm (1899) while attending the theater one evening:

of 100 women of the better class, seventy were attired in this way [lace or neck sacque or waist], ten wore high necks and long sleeves, twelve had low necks, but lace covered arms, while the remainder were half-covered with boleros, lace and ribbon fabric (p. 130).

There was a great variety in the style of sleeves worn during the period 1895-1898, but a commonality was that they all had long sleeves. These long sleeves could be leg-of-mutton or balloon types. Additionally, long narrower sleeves adorned with a ruffle at the wrist and shoulder epaulets or small puffs were a common sight, particularly for the year 1898. For evening wear, a shorter sleeve was worn, such as a very full melon style. But this shorter sleeve was complemented with white long gloves to maintain the coverage of the arms.

The waistline of the Puerto Rican woman was natural, but very small. Through 1895 - 1898, the small size of the waistline was emphasized by either the bell silhouette, a satin band or belt of contrasting color, or the exposed waistband of the skirt. The skirts worn by the ladies of the island to complement the bodices were long,
full, simple, in a "bell shape." By the end of this first period of the research, the bottom fulness of the skirt was exemplified by deep flounces.

The bodices and skirts worn in the photographs incorporated a variety of embellishments. Some examples included lace, embroidery, scalloping, pleating, and flowers. For the time period in question, 1895-1898, the ornamentation tended to be mainly placed on the bodice of the women's day or evening ensemble. Lace was used in the bertha lace collars, which covered the top part of the bodice (see Figure 4.4). The type of embroidery observed in the photographs is what was known as "black work", which was black embroidery on a white background. In the photographs examined the embroidery was used to outline and embellish the edges of the collar. Scalloping and pleating were forms of embellishments created through the construction of the garment. In the photographs analyzed, scalloping was seen in the edges of collars and waistlines. Pleating was dominant in the bodices of the early years of the period and it gave the garment a more tailored and fitted look. Flowers were observed to decorate different areas of the bodice or skirt. For example, constructed flowers were noticed on the back of the band collar. They were also seen resembling a corsage at the waistline of the dress (see Figure 4.5).

These embellishments were part of garments of different fabrics and colors. From the photographs, it was difficult to identify completely the type of fabric used in the clothing of the women. But when examined closely, it was possible to gain a sense of the weight and thickness of the fabric, as well as the type of weave or finish. With these limitations in mind, the fabrics observed in the photographs ranged from light to medium weight. In the case of Figure 4.5, it is noticeable that the woman's garment is made from a textured fabric; the look is similar to that of seer-sucker. Observing the
Figure 4.4: Bertha lace collar. From "Fashions in Puerto Rico, a look into the past" Museo de Arte de Ponce.
Figure 4.5: Flowers decorating band collar and bodice. From “Fashions in Puerto Rico, a look into the past” Museo de Arte de Ponce.
evening dress of Figure 4.2 on page 77, dots on the fabric are noticeable, making it possible to assume that this material could be a type of “dotted swiss.”

The color of the garments was also difficult to determine from the photos. The value ranged from light, med-light, medium, med-dark, to dark shades. Bodices were predominantly of a light value, while the skirts were of a dark value. This combination of light bodice with a dark skirt was a recurring theme during the last two years, 1897 and 1898. In addition, prints made an appearance, and included small dark color flowers on a light background, or large white polka dots, waved lines, or criss-cross stripes against a dark background (see Figure 4.6, 4.7b).

The type of hosiery and footwear worn by these ladies was also difficult to decipher because of the long length of the skirts worn by the Puerto Rican women in the photographs. From the only photograph where footwear was visible, the woman was wearing dark or black color shoes. However, through the eyes of Margherita Hamm, we can vision the type of hosiery and footwear worn by the Puerto Rican women in the late 1890s. Because of the climate it was not uncommon to see well dressed women running around their house in “slippers and bare ankles” (Hamm, 1899, p. 126). But when it came to functions outside the home, such as going to church or any formal and informal occasion, stockings were a requirement (Hamm, 1899, p. 127). The hosiery was in bright patterned colors, not just plain black and solid colors (Hamm, 1899, p. 127). Clocks, a remnant of the Spanish heritage of the country, were an integral part of the stockings. Some of these needlecraft masterpieces started below the ball of the ankle running up to the garter (Hamm, 1899, p. 127). Others clock designs included front pieces of embroidery, drawn work, and lace work. For the ultra-fashionable the clocks
Figure 4.6: Dark color skirt with a light color criss-cross design. *Archivo General de Puerto Rico*, # CP-2 295x.
Figure 4.7: Dark color skirt with light color waved lines pattern. From *Our islands and their people* (p. 270), by W. S. Bryan, 1899, St. Louis, MO: N. D. Thompson Publishing Co.
started at the base of the toes and ran up the instep and ankle halfway to the knee (Hamm, 1899, p. 127).

Hamm also noted the influence of the warm climate on the footwear of the Puerto Rican ladies. For example, Moorish, Turkish and Spanish slippers made out of enamelled cloth, leatheret, leather, kid, patent leather, morocco, cordovan, alpaca, silk satin, and even velvet were a common scene. These slippers range in color from naturals to every stripe of the rainbow. Additionally they could be plain, hand-stitched, machine-stitched, embroidered, or decorated with passementerie, beads, seed pearls, gold thread, or silver appliqué (Hamm, 1899, p. 125). The fashionable women of Puerto Rico not only wore these styles of slippers, but also had as part of their footwear wardrobe the latest designs in boots and shoes from Paris (Hamm, 1899, p. 125). Yet, not all were slaves to the Paris footwear designs. Some women wore American or English boots due to their “comfortable and sensible handicraft” (Hamm, 1899, p. 125). Another style of boot, worn for dancing parties, was of Spanish origin. Hamm (1899) describes this boot as having

a high Spanish instep, the small ankle, and the long narrow toe, and around the upper edge are fastened either little bells or castanets, which make music in time with the dancer’s feet (p. 125-126).

When looking at the jewelry worn by the Puerto Rican ladies during the period of 1895 through 1898, all wore some type of jewelry. These include small drop or stud earrings, brooches or cameos, bracelets, and finger rings. An interesting piece of jewelry is the brooch in Figure 4.8. This metal adornment, worn on the collar,
Figure 4.8: Brooch with the profile of a Spanish Conquistador. From “Fashions in Puerto Rico, a look into the past” Museo de Arte de Ponce.
features the profile of a Spanish conquistador or soldier. Another aspect worth highlighting was the extensive use of finger rings. These pieces of jewelry were seen in pairs or multiple quantities on the fingers of the well-to-do ladies of the island. Interestingly enough, the observations of Margherita Hamm concerning Puerto Rican women’s jewelry does not contradict the researcher’s observations, though seems to present an even more extreme use of jewelry than I describe. Hamm (1899) noted how:

the jewelry is rich, and often tawdry. Large and heavy earrings are common, and gaping earring holes and misshapen ears are seen everywhere as the result. Porto Rican women still wear the heavy hoops and long massive drops, which were discarded by American women fifty years ago (p. 137).

When determining the types of accessories most commonly used by the women of Puerto Rico during the years 1895-1898, one accessory that was noticed in many photos was the fan. In addition to the traditional folding fan made out of wood and printed fabric, another type of fan observed in the photographs was an all white feather folding fan. A curious aspect dealing with the fans was the manner in which some women would carry them; the fans were attached and hanging from very long chain necklaces. The chains could be metal, or as observed in one of the photographs, made out of some type of black material in a wide double-link chain. The manner with which this type of accessory was worn suggested that it was regarded by the women in the photographs as a type of finery or jewelry. The implied importance of the fan for the ladies of the island is supported by Hamm’s (1899) statement that “no Porto Rican woman is ever without
a fan,..." (p. 134). The prevailing style of these cooling instruments was made from sticks of native wood, polished, carved, gilded, silvered, inlaid or even jeweled, with the face made of silk or of strong flexible paper with a highly colored painting or chromo-lithograph (Hamm, 1899, p. 134). Another style was the Spanish lace fan with ivory or tortoise shell sticks and lace, silk or satin face (Hamm, 1899, p. 135). Additionally, various types of fans were made out of feathers including urraca or magpie plume, geese, turkeys and other fowl. The daintiest of the feather fans were made of olive sticks and hummingbirds' crests and breasts (Hamm, 1899, p. 136). Sometimes fans with all of the sticks of ivory or old-fashioned royal fans were seen (Hamm, 1899, p. 135). However, not all fans were masterpieces of decoration and luxury; ordinary fans were made out of palm leaves in different shapes and sizes (Hamm, 1899, p. 135).

But a fan was not the only accessory used by Puerto Rican women. Other items included belts, gloves, hair accessories, and umbrellas or parasols. The belts viewed in the photographs of this investigation were predominantly medium or wide width (inches), and black or dark in color. These very popular items were contrasted against a light color shirtwaist or light color ensemble. Long or elbow length white gloves were part of the evening attire when sleeves were worn short. The hair ornaments observed included hair combs and a type of "bun-holder." The hair comb was worn at the back of the head and was embellished with slim standing flowers and feathers. The "bun-holder" was worn in front of the bun on top of the head, thus serving an aesthetic as well as a functional purpose. The umbrella was not commonly present in the photographs. In actuality, its only appearance was as a prop in studio photograph. But this does not mean that the umbrella was not an important item in the Puerto Rican
woman's appearance. In her observations of the women of the island in 1898, Hamm noticed the parasols and umbrellas to be very similar to those used in North America. The difference was mainly on the larger variety of color and quantity of lace used in the Puerto Rican umbrellas and parasols respectively (Ham, 1899, p. 137). Perhaps parasols were primarily viewed as functional pieces that did not deserve a place in photographs.

In summary, the fashionable appearance of the Puerto Rican women of 1895-1898 was composed of a bell shape silhouette. This silhouette was supported by a pulled up hairstyle, fitted or shirtwaist bodice, high stand/band collar, long full or narrow sleeves with shoulder puffs, belted narrow waistline, and full “bell shape” skirt. These garments were embellished with lace bertha collars, pleating, embroidery, and flowers. A folding fan or a long chain necklace with a folding fan completed the women’s appearance.

Comparison of Puerto Rican and U.S. Dress, 1895-1898. After detailing the fashionable dress of Puerto Rican women for the period 1895-1898, the dress was compared with aspects of fashionable U.S. dress reported in the review of literature. The major similarities and differences are outlined in Table 4.1. When comparing the fashions worn by the women in the United States to those worn by women in Puerto Rico during the 1895 through 1898 time period, it is evident how generally they were very similar. For example, the hourglass or bell shape silhouette is identical for both the American and Puerto Rican women. The silhouette emphasized the broad shoulder, narrow waist, and wide skirt.

Other similar aspects of dress between the Puerto Rican and the American woman of the late 1890s were evident in the neckline/collar, sleeves, bodice,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of Dress</th>
<th>Similarities U.S. &amp; P.R.</th>
<th>P.R. Unique Aspects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silhouette</td>
<td>Hourglass or bell shape</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headwear</td>
<td>Information on U.S. not available</td>
<td>Limited use of hats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Mantilla</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hairstyle</td>
<td>Information on U.S. not available</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodice</td>
<td>Fitted bodice</td>
<td>Shirtwaists worn tucked out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collar/Neckline</td>
<td>High stand or band collar</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low cut necklines-evening</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleeves</td>
<td>Leg-o-mutton</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Balloon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Long and narrow with shoulder puffs, ruffles, epaulets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waistline</td>
<td>Small-emphasized by wide belt</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skirt</td>
<td>Bell shape skirt</td>
<td>Deep flounce at bottom of skirt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1: Comparison of U.S. and Puerto Rican (P.R.) fashions, 1895-1898.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of Dress</th>
<th>Similarities U.S. &amp; P.R.</th>
<th>P.R. Unique Aspects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ornamentation</td>
<td>Bertha lace collars</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Embroidery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scalloping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pleating</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flowers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Simple skirts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabric/Color</td>
<td>Light color shirtwaists</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dark color with</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>white/light color</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>polka-dots or stripes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hosiery</td>
<td>Stockings trimmed with</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>embroidery or clocks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footwear</td>
<td>Buttoned or laced calf-</td>
<td>Moorish, Turkish,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>length boots</td>
<td>Spanish slippers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewelry</td>
<td>Small earrings</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brooches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bracelets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finger rings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessories</td>
<td>Wide belts</td>
<td>Long chain necklace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Umbrellas or parasols</td>
<td>with folding fan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hair combs or pins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
waistline, and skirt. In each case the similarities were strong enough to consider them equal. For example, both group of ladies were wearing very high collars or high stand/band collars. The low necklines of evening garments declared as part of American fashion, were observed in the photographic analysis, as well as by travelers of the time to be part of the Puerto Rican woman's toilette. Likewise, the leg-o-mutton, balloon, and the long narrow sleeves with the shoulder puffs, ruffles or epaulets were fashionable in both the U.S. and Puerto Rico. The fitted bodices were matched with mainly the leg-o-mutton sleeves, while the shirtwaists were complemented with the long narrow sleeve with the shoulder puffs, ruffles, or epaulets.

Because the silhouette of the time was the hourglass or bell shape, for both groups of women the smaller the waistline the better. Thus, the waistline was emphasized with wide belts or waistbands. The skirts worn by the American ladies and the Puerto Rican ladies during the 1895-1898 time period were also similar. But, because the Puerto Rican ladies in the photographs were mainly in full frontal position, it was impossible to determine how the backs of their skirts were constructed. Thus, observations of the similarities of the skirts between the American and Puerto Rican women was restricted to the shape, ornamentation, fabric, and color. Both groups of women wore the type of skirt that lay flat against the waist and spread out gradually toward the ground - the bell shape skirt.

Comparing the type of hosiery worn by the American and Puerto Rican women of the late 1890s, the similarities are noticeable, particularly in the decoration of the stockings. For both groups of women, their stockings were commonly trimmed with embroidery or lace insertions known as clocks. Based on the analysis of the photographs and the supporting literature, there were also some similarities in the
footwear. The similarities stand from the wearing of boots by both the American and Puerto Rican women; in particular, the calf-length close fitting boots, buttoned or laced up the front that were a fashion item in the United States, and based on Margherita Hamm’s observations, in Puerto Rico also. Hamm (1899) went as far as to indicate the use of American made boots by the ladies of the island (p. 125).

The kinds of accessories worn and used by the American and Puerto Rican women can be considered to be the same. From both the photographic analysis and the review of literature, the accessories common to these women were wide belts, umbrellas or parasols, decorative hair combs or hair pins, and fans.

When it comes to garment ornamentation and type of fabric and color, there was a noticeable resemblance between both groups of women. The types of ornamentation examined in the photographic data ranged from lace, embroidery, scalloping, pleating, and flowers. Many of these types of trimmings were consistent with the fashionable embellishments of the U.S., especially the embroidery and lace. Concerning the types of fabrics fashionable for the American and Puerto Rican women, dark color fabrics with white/light color print or pattern were popular with both. Striped and polka-dotted fabrics were used for the construction of the skirts. For both groups of women, a common color ensemble was the light color or white shirtwaist and the dark color/light color pattern skirt.

Although there were many similarities in the fashionable dress of U.S. and Puerto Rican women, there were also some noteworthy differences. The use of hats varied between the two groups. Puerto Rican women appear to have not worn hats as frequently as women in the U. S. Few women in the photos observed wore hats. Additionally, the writings of Margherita Hamm, pointed out the limited use of hats by
Puerto Rican women.

A noticeable difference regarding the types of bodices worn by both groups was the lack of the tailored-shirtwaist in the photographs of the Puerto Rican women analyzed for the study. This popular shirt in the U.S., with its pin-stripes and detachable collar and cuffs, did not seem to be a favorite of the ladies of the island. There was also a noticeable difference in the skirts. By the end of the period in question, the skirts of the Puerto Rican women were designed with a flounce at the bottom of the skirt. This type of skirt was not emphasized in the literature review for American fashions. Consequently, it is assumed that this design aspect was not prominent enough to be considered part of American fashion.

Despite the similarities in the boots worn by both groups of women, Hamm (1899) mentions another type of footwear worn by Puerto Rican women - slippers. These types of shoes were very ornate, made out of delicate materials, and were designated as Moorish, Turkish, and Spanish slippers (p. 125). Again, because the literature examined for the American fashions does not mention these types of footwear, the assumption could be made that they were not a common item, thus, indicating a difference in footwear between the U.S. and Puerto Rico.

A difference seen in the accessories has to do with the fan. Yes, for both groups of women a fan was a common enough item to be considered part of their fashion. But, there is a very noticeable variation in the way Puerto Ricans sometimes carried the fans. The difference lies in the unusual fan used by Puerto Rican women which had a chain attached to it so the fan could be worn as if it were a necklace. It was a particular item not apparent in the review of literature for American fashions, thus making it unique to Puerto Rico.
1899-1917

The takeover of Puerto Rico by the United States after the Spanish-American War of 1898 altered the importation of goods to the island. Puerto Rico began to trade less with Spain and more with the U.S. For example, in 1896, 18% of Puerto Rico's trade was with the U.S., but with the Organic Act of 1901, the percentage rose to 71% (Boyce, 1914, p. 448). This law guaranteed free trade between the U.S. and Puerto Rico. Thus, American merchandise entered the island and Puerto Rican merchandise was exported without payment of customs duties (Verrill, 1914, p. 11).

After fifteen years under the American government, Alpheous Verrill noticed how the Americanization of the island was seen in social life, business, and clothing attire. Aspects of Spanish life, still prevalent in places such as Cuba and other Spanish-American lands, were replaced by the Puerto Ricans who adopted American ideas. The transformation was visible in the up-to-date stores stocked with American and European goods (Verrill, 1914, p. 17).

In 1914, the dry-goods stores of earlier times were being replaced by department stores, such as González Padín (Verrill, 1914, p. 39). In the shops and stores of Puerto Rico a visitor could buy anything that could be found in a New York store and the prices were as low or lower than in the U.S. (Verrill, 1914, p. 20). Not only was American merchandise found in Puerto Rican stores, it could also be found in the American owned stores, such as Gillie and Woodward, that had opened retail locations on the island (Verrill, 1914, p. 30). When walking down the shopping arcade in San Juan, Verrill noted that "the large plate-glass windows of the stores in this section are filled with an attractive display of the latest...Parisian, Spanish, and American wearing apparel, musical instruments, furniture, kitchen utensils, curious,
and every article known to American stores” (Verrill, 1914, p. 40).

Even with the noticeable move toward a more American culture and a less Spanish one, Verrill reported that the women of Puerto Rico were very much still attached to their fans. This aspect of Hispanic culture was also common to Cuba and other Latin countries (Verrill, 1914, p. 104). Holding on to aspects of their Spanish heritage was not only illustrated with apparel items, such as the folding fan, but also in social aspects of their lives. By this time much of Puerto Rican society fraternized social clubs. Natives of the island, Americans, and residents from other nationalities intermingled with each other in Puerto Rican, American, Spanish, and ladies clubs (Verrill, 1914, p. 106). But even with this new manner of socializing, the musical evenings at the Plazas, also known as “Sunday promenade on the plaza” continued to be a part of the Puerto Rican lifestyle (Verrill, 1914, p. 30). These “evenings” were a way to hold on to their Spanish heritage, even though the country was under American rule and influence. At the same token, while holding on to the past through these evenings, the Puerto Rican woman of the time publicly displayed her fashions.

Fashion in Puerto Rico at the beginning of the twentieth century varied across the three major cities of the island. In San Juan, the capital, fashion was said to be more Spanish than in the southern city of Ponce, where a bigger French influence existed. In the western city of Mayaguez the beginnings of a local mode of dressing was making its mark (Santaliz, 1985, p. 22). But by 1914 it seems these differences may have become less evident. While travelling through Puerto Rico in that year, Verrill came in contact with all levels of the island’s population, and came to the conclusion that
the Porto Ricans have few local or unique habits and no national costume, and many of the interesting mannerisms and Spanish-American customs have been destroyed by the Americanisation of the island:... mantillas are no longer in evidence and even the beautiful silken shawls worn by the women of Havana, Central and South America, and San Domingo are scarcely ever seen on Porto Rican shoulders (p. 104).

**Puerto Rican women's fashions, 1899-1917.** The analysis of the fashions of the Puerto Rican woman during the time frame of 1899 through 1917, revealed a variety of silhouettes including the S curve-monobosom, the modified S curve- no monobosom, empire, princess, pear-triangular, and tubular-barrel. Each of the silhouettes dominated at different time frames of the period in question. From the observed photographs, the common silhouette starting the century was still the bell shape of the 1895-1898 first period. However, by 1902, the S curve-monobosom shape was fashionable among the women of Puerto Rico (see Figure 4.9). Beginning around 1906, the modified S curve-no monobosom was observed in the photographs. This silhouette maintained the S bend shape but blousing was more evenly distributed around the bodice. The "pouter-pigeon blousing" in the bodice had disappeared. The princess silhouette made its mark during the same time frame as the modified S curve-no monobosom, 1906 -1911. By 1911, a more straight silhouette with a higher waistline started to make its appearance - empire. This shape was quite dominant in the Puerto Rican women's fashion scene until around 1916 when the hints of fuller silhouettes (i.e. pear-triangular shape, tubular-barrel) were observed in the photographs. Through the first 10 or 11 years of these eighteen years analyzed two-
Figure 4.9: S curve-monobosom silhouette. From “Fashions in Puerto Rico, a look into the past” Museo de Arte de Ponce.
piece garments were the norm. By around 1910, with the appearance of the princess silhouette and later the empire, one-piece garments started to become more common in the fashion scene. By the end of this period, one-piece garments were the rule.

The lack of headwear seen in the previous time period of 1895-1898, was still reflected in the first nine years of this 1899-1917 time period. However, when examining photos taken outdoors, Puerto Rican women's use of hats becomes noticeable. The hats observed were large, flat brim ones trimmed with plumes, tulle and a veil. Before 1909, the hats were visible but not dominant. However, by 1909 these extremely wide flat brim hats were a common aspect of the Puerto Rican woman's toilette (see Figure 4.10 and 4.11). These heavily adorned hats were noticed in both outdoor and indoor photographs. At the same time that these very large hats were in vogue, it was observed how another very different type of headwear was common with the women of the island. Headbands were worn by some of the younger appearing women of the island; they crossed the crown of the head and were tied into a large bow or rosette on the side (see Figure 4.12 and 4.13). Finally, by 1913, there was a great variety of hats to select from, including ones with no brim, medium-size brim, or large brim hats trimmed with feathers, flowers, and tulle. These styles were seen through the rest of the period. For evening wear, the headwear consisted of thin cording, or a narrow beaded headband worn across forehead or over hair bangs (see Figure 4.14a, 4.15).

Each type of headwear was complemented by a certain hairstyle. For example, between 1900 through 1905 the "pompadour" mode of dressing the hair was the most dominant in the photographs examined (see Figure 4.16). The style called for the hair to be swept up with extreme fullness into a top bun. By 1906, changes were noticed in
Figure 4.10: Extremely wide flat brim hats trimmed with feathers and flowers; long chain necklace with folding fan. From “Fashions in Puerto Rico, a look into the past” Museo de Arte de Ponce.
Figure 4.11: Extremely wide flat brim hats; “apron” or “dungaree” look. From “Fashions in Puerto Rico, a look into the past” Museo de Arte de Ponce.
Figure 4.12: Wide headband with large bow on the side. From *Gráfico*, (1913, November 29).
Figure 4.13: Wide headband with rosette on the side. Tomasini Gómez family album.
Figure 4.14: Narrow beaded headband across the forehead. Archivo General de Puerto Rico, # N 635 CP-17 c.48.
Figure 4.15: Narrow cording headband across the forehead. *Archivo General de Puerto Rico*, # CP8 283g.
Figure 4.16: Pompadour hairstyle. *Archivo General de Puerto Rico*, #CP-2 265b
the common hairstyle. The hair was still swept up with fullness, but a middle part came into fashion. In addition to the middle-part, a softer waved fullness made its appearance. This fullness could be all-around or just at the sides. An example is the “heart shape” hairstyle seen in Figure 4.17abc. For the last three years of the time period, 1914-1917, the fullness of the hair dramatically decreased. The hair could be gathered up, with the appearance of waves molding the head. There were side parts or middle parts with bangs. Interestingly enough, from the analysis of the photographs there seems to be instances in which Puerto Rican women wore short hairstyles.

To better visualize the clothing ensembles of the Puerto Rican women of 1899 through 1917, the following discussion will include bodice, neckline/collar, sleeves, waistline, and skirt details corresponding to particular silhouettes or looks. The bell shape of the previous time period (1895-1898) was maintained at the beginning of the twentieth century with a fitted or semi-fitted bodice. Just as the nineteenth century ones, these bodices between 1899-1902 were worn tucked into a skirt or worn over the waistband and hips in a “peplum” (see Figure 4.18i). As earlier, the bodices often had lace yokes or bertha collars and front pleating. Likewise, the collars for these bodices were predominantly high bands or stand collars in a contrasting color to the bodice or with contrasting color trim. As for the sleeves complementing these types of bodices, they duplicate the ones from the nineteenth century time period. These sleeves were long and narrow with shoulder puffs or ruffled epaulets. The melon or balloon style sleeves had been modified to have a sort of limp fullness. To complete the “bell shape look,” the natural small waistline was emphasized by a belt, satin band, or waistband. The skirt consisted of a long, almost to the floor, “bell shape” or full gore skirt; they were plain (i.e. solid color) and sometimes trimmed with a small ruffle.
Figure 4.17: "Heart shape" hairstyle. From "Fashions in Puerto Rico, a look into the past" Museo de Arte de Ponce.
Figure 4.18: Shirtwaist peplum. *Archivo General de Puerto Rico; # CP-2 296a.*
To emphasize the S curve-mnobosom silhouette observed between 1902 - 1905, the bodice was constructed with what is known as "pouter-pidgeon blousing." These waists (i.e. shirtwaists or blouses) were worn tucked into the skirt. They were very heavily embellished with everything from pin-tucks, lace, applique, and satin ribbons, often with many types of trims combined (see Figure 4.9 on page 99). The dominant collar was the high band or stand collar reaching the chin. This collar tended to have a small ruffled edge or what appeared to be "lettuce edge trim." The sleeves complementing the bodice ranged from elbow, to 3/4, to long length. They were set in, and straight narrow, or straight with some limp fullness. In contrast to the previous century, the focal point of these sleeves was at the bottom, as can be seen with the fullness of the bishop sleeves, and with band cuffs, flounces, small ruffles, and / or heavy embellishment. To emphasize the S curve bend through the waistline, a belt, which was wider in the front and narrowing toward the back, was commonly observed (see Figure 4.9). To complete the S curve-mnobosom look, the ladies of the island were observed wearing skirts which had back pleating for fullness, or ones swept into a small train. In addition, another style of skirt common to the Puerto Rican woman of the time was a long, floor grazing skirt, which fit smooth over the hips to the knees. The bottom part of the skirt emphasized fullness by flaring out. This was accomplished with a deep flounce, tiers of ruffles, or open pleats with embellishments.

In what I have come to classify as the modified S curve-no monobosom silhouette, the bodices tended to have an all-around fullness. They were worn tucked into the skirt and were commonly heavily trimmed (see Figure 4.19). As part of this modified bodice, a "pinafore" look was observed with overhanging sleeves (see Figure 4.11a on page 102) and bolero jackets or bolero lace impressions. The most dominant
Figure 4.19: Modified S curve-no monobosom silhouette heavily trimmed. *Archivo Central* - University of Puerto Rico, #53-2.
type of collar observed to be worn by the Puerto Rican women was the high stand collar of sheer or lace fabric which filled a round or square neckline. The sleeves of these bodices ranged from elbow to 3/4 to long length. They were set in, straight and narrow, or with limp fullness. The bottom portion was emphasized by band cuffs, flounces, small ruffles, or heavy embellishment. The small natural waistline was emphasized by a belt, satin band, or the waistband of the skirt. Even though some of the skirts observed for this period still had back pleating for fullness or were swept into a wisp of a train, the most predominant style of skirt was the pleated or gored, giving the illusion of an A-line silhouette that was further accented with bottom flounces or open pleats. They were simple in embellishments; decorative buttons were observed to be very popular (see Figure 4.11c on page 102). In addition, these skirts either just grazed the floor in length or had a shoe “instep” length.

Later in the time frame of 1906-1911, princess seam dresses made their appearance as noted in a photo from the 1985 exhibition “Fashions in Puerto Rico: A look into the past” at the Museo de Arte de Ponce (see Figure 4.20). With the princess seam style of dress, a lower neckline (i.e. jewel) was the most common. Just as the modified S curve-no monobosom, the sleeves of the princess style ranged from elbow to 3/4 to long length. They were mainly narrow and straight and trimmed with flounces, small ruffles, and lace. Since there was not a waistband in the princess seam style of dress, the waistline drew its shape from the woman’s body. The types of skirts observed with the princess style dress included gored full skirts as in Figure 4.18, as well as a more A-line, simple skirt as in Figure 4.10b on page 101.

The empire silhouette of 1909-1915, was manifested through semi-fitted or fitted bodices of a shorter length. These bodices are more aptly described as bodice.
Figure 4.20: Princess seam silhouette. From “Fashions in Puerto Rico, a look into the past” Museo de Arte de Ponce.
areas because the dominant garment for this time frame was one piece, but this is not to say that two-piece garments in this silhouette were not seen. An example is the modified shorter length semi-fitted bodice known as the "apron" or "dungaree" look (see Figures 4.17c page 109 and 4.21). Another type of bodice related to the empire silhouette and commonly seen was what I have come to classify as the knee length or calf length straight tunic (see Figure 4.22). These bodices were simply embellished with lace insets, embroidery, tucks or decorative buttons. In contrast to the daytime bodices, the evening bodices were observed to be heavily embellished. These "fichu" impression bodices were trimmed with beading, sequins, and fringe to name a few (see Figure 4.23).

The dominant necklines for the empire silhouette and its modified versions were low cut and took the shape of the jewel, round, scoop, V, and square necklines. One of the most commonly observed sleeves was the short straight sleeve with a long narrow undersleeve (see Figure 4.11b page 102). Additionally, short kimono style sleeves with less trim and simple embellishment were popular. Depending on the "empire" silhouette version of the bodice worn, the waistlines were slightly above the natural or all the way to a high waist. These waistlines were emphasized by stitching on the waistband, a decorative band, or a wide sash. Besides the presence of the shoe "instep" length, pleated or gored, A-line silhouette skirt, a dominant skirt of the 1909-1915 time period tended to be a straighter silhouette. These can be described as shoe "instep" in length, straight, with simple or no embellishment. Another type of the "straight" skirt was the tunic or straight overskirt (see Figure 4.22). The tunic or overskirt was commonly knee or calf length, while the straight underskirt was long or ankle length.
Figure 4.21: "Apron" or "dungaree" look. From "Fashions in Puerto Rico, a look into the past" Museo de Arte de Ponce.
Figure 4.22: Overskirt effect or tunic look. From *Gráfico*, (1912, February 11).
Figure 4.23: Eveningwear with fichu impression; heavily jeweled. From "Fashions in Puerto Rico, a look into the past" Museo de Arte de Ponce.
In contrast with the daytime skirts, the evening dresses had very long skirts, that reached to the floor or rested on it. The evening skirts were draped to outline the female body. They were seen with or without an overskirt/tunic. In addition to heavy embellishment, many were observed to end in the back with a “fish tail” train (see Figure 4.23).

For the last two years of the period from 1899-1917, the dominant silhouettes were the pear shape and the barrel-tubular. These silhouettes called for one piece garments. Within these garments the bodice was predominantly loose and non-fitted; it could be described as blouseon. The bodice area was embellished for example with decorative buttons, binding, and lace-bands. To complement this loose-fitting bodice, the commonly observed collars were modified versions of the sailor, shirt, rolled, poets, and chelsea collars. To go with the simpler look, kimono style sleeves with simple trims were popular. The waistline for this time frame appeared to be moving toward a wider, less fitted, looser look (see Figure 4.24). With this looser look, the skirts ranged from the “dirndl” or “peasant” style, to the barrel/straight cut skirt. Both were seen in the ankle or above ankle length. Both had simple or no trimming. Interestingly enough, the appearance of patch pockets on the skirts was noticed for the first time (see Figure 4.24b).

As seen through the previous descriptions of the garments, the ornamentation varied with the silhouettes. In particular, differences were evident in the amount of trimmings used on a garment. For example, during the time frame of the bell shape silhouette (1899-1902), embellishments were in moderate amounts and included ruffles, lace, tucks, embroidery, and ruching. For the S curve-monobosom and the beginning of the modified S-curve-no monobosom period (1902-1911), the
Figure 4.24: Patch pockets on skirt as decoration. From *Puerto Rico Ilustrado*, (1917) vol. 8
trimmings were observed to be heavy in quantity. These included applique, lace, flounces, tiers, flowers, pin-tucks, ribbonwork, embroidery, lace bands, and cording. Noticeable in the end of the modified S curve-no monobosom period (closer to the 1910s) was a decrease in the amount of trimming. For the empire, pear shape and barrel/tubular silhouettes (1911-1917) a simple look was the dominant appearance and it was accomplished with more subtle trimmings such as lace bands, binding, braid or cording, and decorative buttons. In contrast to its daytime look, the evening empire silhouette was more moderately to heavily embellished. These dressy trimmings included beading, beaded fringes, fringes, sequins, satin ribbon, pearls, and satin stitch.

As for the fabric and color of the garments examined through the photographic analysis, as discussed previously in the period of 1895-1898, the conclusions were based on the apparent weight and weave of the material, and the light/dark value of the color. Through the first five or six years of 1899 through 1917, a combination of a light/white waist and a dark/black skirt was observed. The fabrics common to the first eleven years appeared to be light to medium weight. The light weight fabrics appeared to include such cotton types as batiste, lawn, plain weave, and “dotted swiss.” For the last seven years of the period (1910-1917), daytime fabrics ranged from satin weave, cotton types, and linen. These fabrics appeared in prints, geometrical patterns, checks, and stripes. For evening, the dominant fabrics were silk satin, chiffon, crepe, and organza.

As with the earlier period because of the photographic data for the time frame of 1902-1907, it was difficult to see the hosiery and footwear of the Puerto Rican women. In the few occasions where footwear was seen, the women were wearing ankle
length boots with side buttons or laces up closure. The boots had a flat heel or a Louis heel and were black/dark or light/white color. Dark/black or light/white color pumps were also observed in the photographs. By 1911 through the end of the time period, the pumps seen in the data had top ornaments such as a bow, buckle, bar, or rosette at the vamp of the shoe. In addition the single strap pump or “ruby keller” and the pump tied with a bow across the instep were also observed. For the last year, 1917, a style known as “tango shoes” and “Cuban heels” were seen worn on some Puerto Rican women. Hosiery in fashion during 1899 through 1917 was primarily white/light or dark/black solid colors stockings during the majority of the period. However, a more decorative look was seen during the last two years of the period (1916-1917), when white/light color stockings with dark/black dots or stripes were visible.

The type of jewelry worn by Puerto Rican women during the years of 1899 through 1917 included earrings, necklaces, pins or brooches, and bracelets, just to name a few. Small drop or stud earrings; short or medium chain necklaces with a pendant, locket, crucifix, or charm; and finger rings from one to multiple quantities were repeatedly seen in the photographs throughout the time period (see Figure 4.23 page 118). The popular band or stand collar, was often embellished with a cameo or brooch worn on it or at its bottom edge. In addition, these pins were worn on lace “jabots.” Cameos and brooches were not the only type of pins worn by the ladies of the islands. Lapel pin-up watches or lockets were seen during the time frame of 1908-1913. Bracelets including bangles, “curb” link, double beaded strands, and “serpentine” were common pieces of jewelry through almost the entire period. In many occasions, bracelets were worn in multiple quantities. Other types of jewelry,
appearing at the end of the time period, were beaded necklaces, in a variety of lengths, and the wristwatch.

Of all the accessories worn or used by the women of Puerto Rico during the time period of 1899 through 1917, the one constant feature in photographs through all the years was the folding fan and the very long chain necklace with folding fan (see Figure 4.10b page 101). Other accessories observed in the first years of 1899-1917 included hair combs, hair pins, and hair barrettes. The straight handle umbrella or parasol became a more common item in the photographs, particularly during the years of 1903-1913. It was not uncommon from 1899 to 1917 to see Puerto Rican women wearing small, round, wire-rim eyeglasses. By the latter half of 1899-1917, the appearance of small purses was noticed. These came beaded, in chain mesh, as a "reticule" handbag, or in a pouch handbag. During the time frame of 1905-1914, elbow length white gloves were part of the school graduation ensemble and the evening toilette.

To summarize, the fashions of the Puerto Rican women during the years of 1899 through 1917 can be classified into six main silhouettes or looks. They include the bell shape of the first period (1899-1901), the S curve-monobosom (1902-1905), the modified S curve-no monobosom (1906-1911), the princess (1906-1911), the empire (1911-1916), and the pear shape and tubular/barrel silhouettes (1916-1917). Along with these silhouettes, the appearance of the Puerto Rican woman changed from one of long hair, large hats, ornate bodices, high stand collars, long sleeves, small waists and long full skirts to a more relaxed look with shorter hair, smaller hats, simple one piece garments with low necklines and short sleeves, loose waistlines and calf length skirts. With the evolution from the ornate bell shape to the
simple barrel silhouette, the types of embellishments and their amount also became more simple with time.

**Comparison of Puerto Rican and U.S. Dress, 1899-1917.** In contrasting the dominant fashions worn by the women in the United States to that of the women in Puerto Rico during the 1899 through 1917 time period it is noticed how generally they are similar, but in some aspects there are clear differences (see Table 4.2). Similarities are seen in the silhouettes of the period including the S-silhouette or S-shape curve, the empire and princess look, and the pear and tubular/barrel shape. Yet, even though the silhouettes worn are the same, a difference in time of adoption is noticed. In particular, the Puerto Rican women tended to lag two or three years behind their U.S. counterparts when adopting some silhouettes, particularly the earlier silhouettes such as the S-shape, princess look, and to some extent the empire. Moving into the mid-1910s, however, the lagging between the Puerto Rican and American form of dress started to diminish. In 1916-1917 the pear-triangular shape and the tubular-barrel silhouettes were adopted by both groups at the same time.

Other similarities between the American and Puerto Rican fashions include headwear, hairstyle, bodice, neckline/collar, sleeves, waistline, skirt, ornamentation, fabric/color, and hosiery/footwear. When looking at the headwear in fashion in Puerto Rico during 1899-1917, four different styles were emphasized. These include the flat brim hats, the extremely wide brim hats, smaller or brimless hats, and evening headwear. Both groups of women wore all of these styles of headwear, but again some variations were evident in the extent of popularity and time of adoption. For example, in the first years of the period (1899-1905) Puerto Rican women were not seen wearing hats very often. However, by the 1910s, hats were noticed to be a very
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of Dress</th>
<th>Similarities U.S. &amp; P.R.</th>
<th>P.R. Unique Aspects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silhouette</td>
<td>S-Shape</td>
<td>Bell shape maintained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Princess</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Empire</td>
<td>S-shape-monobosom and empire adopted later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pear-Shape</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tubular/Barrel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headwear</td>
<td>Flat Brim Hats</td>
<td>Wide headband with side bow or rosette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extremely Wide Brim Hats</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Smaller Or Brimless Hats</td>
<td>Popularity of hats increased with time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evening Headwear</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hairstyle</td>
<td>“Pompadour”</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less bouffant soft waves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hairstyle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Short-length hair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodice</td>
<td>“Pouter-pidgeon blousing” waist</td>
<td>Delayed adoption “pouter-pidgeon” waist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heavy embellished waists</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Princess</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Empire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tunic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collar/Neckline</td>
<td>High stand collars</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>jewel, round, square</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fichu illusions-evening</td>
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</table>

Table 4.2: Comparison of U.S. and Puerto Rican (P.R.) fashions, 1899-1917.
Table 4.2 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of Dress</th>
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<th>P.R. Unique aspects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sleeves</td>
<td>Long with bottom fullness or emphasis</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Short sleeve with long undersleeve</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kimono style</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waistline</td>
<td>S-curve</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small waist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Princess</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Empire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Loose fit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skirt</td>
<td>Long smooth fitting, gathered at center back with slight train</td>
<td>Delayed adoption S-shape skirt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plain gore with decoration or flounce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stitched down pleats fuller at bottom</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Straight simple shoe “instep” length</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tunic or knee-overskirt</td>
<td>continued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspects of Dress</td>
<td>Similarities U.S. &amp; P.R.</td>
<td>P.R. Unique Aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ornamentation</td>
<td>Lace</td>
<td>Ribbonwork</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pin-tucks</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Ruffles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flounces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Insertions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Embroidery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>evening-Beading</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fringes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sequins</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ribbon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fabric/Color</td>
<td>Light/white color</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Light weight cotton</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Batiste</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lawn</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Linen</td>
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<td>Patterned fabrics-checks</td>
<td>stripes</td>
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<td>Hosiery</td>
<td>Solid color stockings-light or dark</td>
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<td>Footwear</td>
<td>Laced or buttoned boot</td>
<td>Delayed adoption strapped pump</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Louis heel</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pumps with ornaments or straps</td>
<td>continued</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Aspects of Dress</th>
<th>Similarities U.S. &amp; P.R</th>
<th>P.R. Unique Aspects</th>
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<td>Jewelry</td>
<td>Necklaces with pendants</td>
<td>Worn in large amounts and varieties - Small earrings</td>
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<td>Oblong or round pins</td>
<td>Necklace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Long necklaces</td>
<td>Finger rings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bracelets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessories</td>
<td>Parasols and umbrellas</td>
<td>Folding fan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small purse with strap or chain</td>
<td>Long chain necklace with folding fan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
common item of dress in the Puerto Rican women’s appearance. The hairstyles complement the fashion headwear of the time. For both the American and Puerto Rican women of 1899-1917, the fashionable hairstyles included the “pompadour,” a less bouffant style with soft waves and side fullness, and the short hairstyle.

The comparable bodices of the time period for both the Puerto Rican and American women included the “pouter-pidgeon bloused” waists, waists with heavy trimming, empire and princess bodices, and the tunic style. Again, difference in time of adoption was seen. In particular, Puerto Rican women did not adopt the “pouter-pidgeon” waists until a couple of years after U.S. women. As part of the fashionable bodices, the neckline/collar as well as the sleeves were similar for both groups. These include the high stand collars and low necklines, the long sleeves with bottom fullness and the kimono sleeves. The waistlines were alike in the S-curve, the empire, and the loose fit at the end of the 1899-1917 period. Additionally, from the S-curve shape skirts at the beginning of the time period, all the way to the ankle or mid-calf length skirt of 1916 and 1917, there were strong similarities in the skirts worn by both groups. But as in other aspects of dress, the time of adoption on the S-shape skirts by the Puerto Rican women was delayed by a couple of years. However, as the period of 1899-1917 moved on, the women of the island and their skirts caught up with the American fashion.

The ornamentation of the fashions for both groups was also similar. Both the Puerto Ricans and the Americans were seen wearing, throughout the time period, garments trimmed with lace, pin-tucks, ruffles, flounces, insertions, and embroidery just to name a few. For eveningwear, the ladies of the U.S. and Puerto Rico wore dresses embellished with beading, fringes, sequins and ribbon.
Discussing the similarities of the fabrics and colors between the Puerto Rican and the American is a little difficult since these aspects of dress for the Puerto Rican fashions are based on the analysis of black and white photos. With the limited information available, it can be concluded that there were some similarities in the fabrics and color. Particularly noticeable were the cotton light weight fabrics of the S-curve silhouette time frame. Such fabrics as lawn, nun's veiling, batiste in light or white colors were fashionable with both Puerto Rican and U.S. women. Other similar fabrics were seen at the end of the time period, including linen and patterned fabrics-checks and stripes.

Footwear and hosiery were comparable to an extent. Items popular throughout 1899-1917 with both the Puerto Rican and American women include laced up or buttoned up ankle boots, shoes with Louis heels, slippers or pumps with vamp ornaments, and pumps with a strap. From the observed hosiery, it can be concluded that solid color, light or dark stockings were commonly worn by both groups. However, as with the S-curve silhouette, there was some time lag in Puerto Rico before the adoption of certain styles of footwear. An example was the single strap pumps.

Besides the already discussed differences in the time of adoption of certain aspects of dress between the Puerto Rican and the U.S. women during the time of 1899-1917, differences in actual aspects of dress were also apparent. An immediately noticed difference was that Puerto Rican women maintained the bell shape silhouette from the nineteenth century into the early 1900s. Through the examination of the photographs of the Puerto Rican women of 1899-1917, it was noticed how the hourglass or bell shape silhouette from the previous time period analyzed was still popular in the first two or three years of this time period. This reflects a clear
difference with the U.S. women who did not include this silhouette as part of their twentieth century fashion.

Other observed differences between the American fashions and the Puerto Rican appearance were in the headwear, jewelry, and accessories. At the beginning of this time period the Puerto Rican women were not seen wearing hats that often, whereas hats were very fashionable in the U.S. In the early 1910s, the Puerto Rican women had adopted a unique style of headwear; a headband across the head tied into a large bow or rosette on the side. This style of headwear is a major difference between the groups, since it was not reported to have been fashionable in the U.S.

When considering the jewelry fashionable to the time of 1899 through 1917, it is noticed how dominant an aspect of dress it was for the Puerto Rican women. The women of the island wore large amounts and varieties of jewelry. In contrast, jewelry seems to have been of less importance for American fashion, since the literature review did not reveal much discussion about it. The Puerto Rican women of this time are seen wearing at least one piece of jewelry all the time. In the majority of the cases, they have more than one piece. It was not an uncommon sight to see Puerto Rican women wearing small drop earrings, a medium chain necklace with a pendant, several finger rings, and one or two bracelets all at one time.

When contrasting the accessories used or worn by the women of Puerto Rico and of the United States, there also tends to be a clear Puerto Rican fashion. Yes, some similarities existed between both groups. These were exemplified by the parasols and umbrellas, and the small purses with a strap or chain. But, not once was the fashionable feather boa of the U.S. seen in the Puerto Rican women analyzed. By the same token, the constant sight of the folding fan and the long chain necklace with folding
fan of the Puerto Rican women seems to represent a fashion unique to Puerto Rico.

1918-1920

In this small time period of three years, 1918-1920, the 1917 “Jones Act”, giving U.S. citizenship to all Puerto Ricans was already a year old. In addition, the First World War, started in 1914, was coming to an end. With important social, economical and cultural aspects such as these, the Puerto Rican woman found herself wearing a simpler, more practical fashion style.

**Puerto Rican women’s fashions, 1918-1920.** The dominant silhouette of the years 1918 through 1920 is what I categorized as the tubular-barrel look (see Figure 4.25). This silhouette was manifested through one piece dresses which were relaxed in appearance. To a lesser extent, the pear-triangular shape of the previous time period of 1899-1917 was still seen in the photographs.

The now common sight of hats on Puerto Rican women’s heads came in different styles. One of the styles of headwear observed in the data was composed of a deep crown and a wide or medium-wide brim. Another style of hat worn by the women of the island was what we know as a “cloche” hat. This hat was typically worn low over the eyes, a style suited to the fashionable hairstyles of the time. The mode of hairdressing most commonly seen in the photographs was the short or “bobbed” hairstyle. This cropped hairdo was curled or waved, had soft slight fullness, and was commonly worn with a side part (see Figure 4.25).

To complement the tubular-barrel silhouette, the bodice was naturally fitting or loosely fitted. It was very similar in appearance to the blouson style of bodice. The overall look of these bodices was one of simplicity. When trimmings were seen in the photographs, they were simple geometrical embellishments. Attention was brought to
Figure 4.25: Tubular/barrel silhouette. *Archivo General de Puerto Rico,* # CPB N283 b.
the center front of the garment with decorative buttons and panels of lace or with a contrasting color inset (see Figure 4.25b).

With these simple garments, V, square, scoop, and round necklines were quite popular. Also seen in the photographs analyzed were deeper cut necklines filled with a fabric panel and V neck collars in the "poets" and "sailor" styles (see Figure 4.26b). Sometimes collars were made out of ruffles or lace.

The types of sleeves complemented the bodice included a variety of simple styles. They were short, elbow, 3/4 length, or long sleeves; straight, set in or "kimono." In addition, these sleeves came with or without edge trim or cuffs.

The barrel or tubular silhouette was enhanced through the waistline and skirt. The waistline was loose and not narrow. It fell slightly above the natural waist, at the natural waist, and even sometimes at drop waist. It was emphasized by a wide sash, a self-belt, loose waistband, or waistseam. The straight/tubular skirt was ankle length to mid-calf. On occasion, the straight overskirt-underskirt look, as well as the pear shape overskirt-straight underskirt look were apparent. The skirt was constant with the theme of simplicity. As a continuation from the end of the 1899-1917 period, patch pockets as decorative and functional aspects of female dress were seen.

As an echo of the simple look, the ornamentation in the garments of 1918-1920, was kept to a minimum; in some instances it was nonexistent. Ornamentation took the form of lace collars, embroidery (i.e. "black" and "white" work), smocking, and cording. The fabrics tended to have a drapey appearance from light weight materials that could be a cotton type, crepe, and chiffon. Other fabrics observed included taffeta and satin. When it comes to color, the dominance of solid colors and geometrical prints was noticeable. Colors ranged from light to dark values. Prints or patterns such
Figure 4.26: Patch pockets on skirt as decoration; modified sailor collar. *Archivo General de Puerto Rico*, #CP-24 402.
as polka dots and gingham were observed on the apparel of Puerto Rican women (see Figure 4.25b).

Because of the shorter lengths in the skirt, it was possible to acquire a better understanding of the hosiery and footwear of the Puerto Rican women in 1918-1920. Stockings ranged from white/light or black/dark color and some had textured design. In many instances the stockings appeared to match the color of the shoes. As for footwear, ankle boots with side buttons closure were still in fashion, as were light/white or dark/black pumps with Louis or Cuban heels. In addition, single and double strap pumps and the “tango shoe” remained popular during this time period.

Even though the women of Puerto Rico wore jewelry during this time period, the amount of jewelry worn reflects the notion of the simple/uncluttered look. Through the analysis of the photographs it was possible to tell that small earrings and short or mid-length chain necklace with or without pendant were part of the jewelry worn. In addition, a long beaded necklace, bracelets and bangle bracelets, wristwatch, and finger rings were worn. The important aspect to notice concerning the jewelry was the minimal amount worn at a time; a correlation to the appearance of 1918-1920.

The accessories observed to be a part of the Puerto Rican women’s fashion of 1918-1920 included handbags such as the “reticule” style, fabric pouch, and “clutch” styles. And even as the end of this period marked 22 years under American influence and rule, the folding fan and the very long chain necklace with folding fan were still part of Puerto Rican women’s fashion.

In summary, the fashion appearance of the women of Puerto Rico during the years of 1918 through 1920 can be described as simple and uncluttered. This is reflected through the tubular/barrel silhouette, the short hair style and hats worn low
over the eyes, the baggy bodice, low necklines, simple sleeves, loose waistline, and plain skirts. Trims were kept at a minimum and the amount of jewelry worn at one time was reduced.

**Comparison of Puerto Rican and U.S. Dress, 1918-1920.** In comparing the dominant fashion wore by the women in Puerto Rico to that of the women in the United States during the 1918 through 1920 time period it is noticed how both sets of women are dressed almost identically (see Table 4.3). The similarities in their mode of dress include the silhouette, hats and hairstyles, bodice, necklines/collars, sleeves, waistlines, skirts, and to some extent the footwear. As for ornamentation, fabric, and color, these comparisons were not possible, since information of what was fashionable in the U.S. was not found.

The similarities of dress between the American women and the Puerto Rican are based of the same tubular/barrel silhouette. Headwear for both groups of ladies included the high crown with medium or wide brims and the cloche hats. To complement these types of headwear, the hairstyles for both groups of women were wavy and cut short-bobbed. The similarities continued with the bodice, neckline/collar and sleeves. The bodice of the American and the Puerto Rican women was blousy, with a natural fit. With this type of bodice, collars with long narrow revers or “poets” type, “sailor” style, or standing collars with open, or round or square necklines were included. Added on to the bodice are the long, straight fitted sleeves or kimono style common to both groups. In addition, the loose waistline and ankle length tubular skirt were similar aspects in the fashions of the Americans and Puerto Ricans.

To an extent the similarities extend to footwear. Both the women of the U.S. and Puerto Rico have been described as wearing pumps with Louis heels and strap(s).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of Dress</th>
<th>Similarities U.S. &amp; P.R.</th>
<th>P.R. Unique Aspects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silhouette</td>
<td>Tubular-barrel</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headwear</td>
<td>High crown medium/wide</td>
<td>Hats worn low over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>brim hats</td>
<td>eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cloche hats</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hairstyle</td>
<td>Short wavy hairstyle-</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bobbed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodice</td>
<td>Natural fit-blowson</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collar/Neckline</td>
<td>Collars with long narrow</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>revers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sailor collar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Standing collars with open</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>necklines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleeves</td>
<td>Long straight fitted</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sleeves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kimono style</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waistline</td>
<td>Loose waistline</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skirt</td>
<td>Ankle length tubular</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>skirts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**continued**

Table 4.3: Comparison of U.S. and Puerto Rican (P.R.) fashions, 1918-1920.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of Dress</th>
<th>Similarities U.S. &amp; P.R.</th>
<th>P.R. Unique Aspects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ornamentation</td>
<td>Information on U.S. not available</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabric/color</td>
<td>Information on U.S. not available</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hosiery</td>
<td>Information on U.S. not available</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footwear</td>
<td>Strapped pumps with Louis heels</td>
<td>No unique aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tangoshoes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewelry</td>
<td>Long beaded necklace</td>
<td>Additional jewelry-worn in moderation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessories</td>
<td>Feather fan</td>
<td>Folding fan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Long chain necklace with folding fan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
for the other type of footwear described as part of the fashion for the American, such as oxfords and gaiters, these were not seen in the photographs for the Puerto Rican women. Thus it can be assumed that they were not part of the Puerto Rican fashions.

Continuing with the notion of differences in the American and Puerto Rican women's mode of dress, jewelry, and accessories need to be discussed. From the literature review of the American fashion for the time, the only item mentioned for jewelry was a long rope of pearls, amber, jade or other semi-precious stones. In observing the jewelry worn by the Puerto Rican women the presence of long beaded necklaces was noted. In addition earrings, chain necklaces, finger rings, bracelets and / or wristwatches were also part of their dress, but in lesser quantities than had been worn by Puerto Rican women earlier in the century. Were these items of jewelry not common in U.S. fashion or so common as to not be worth mentioning? Or does the presence of these items have to do with the nature of the Puerto Rican woman and her love for jewelry?

Comparing the accessories of the Puerto Rican with the those of the American women for 1918-1920, fans appeared for both groups. The difference stands between the feather fan in the U.S. and the everyday folding fan in Puerto Rico; the latter still was connected with the appearance of the Puerto Rican woman. Not left behind, the long chain necklace with the folding fan was also a part of Puerto Rican women's dress of 1918-1920.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

The intent of this research was to examine Puerto Rican women's dress from 1895 through 1920, to determine if U.S. fashions influenced the island's manner of dress after the American takeover in 1898. Clothing is a major aspect in the study of material culture and adaptation occurs quickly with dress and other material objects. Thus, it was valuable to study Puerto Rican dress to determine the extent that women of the island adopted to American dress. To achieve the objective of the research, a descriptive historical survey was conducted by examining photographs of Puerto Rican women from 1895-1920, and analyzing their mode of dress.

The conclusions to this study of fashion and acculturation are discussed in four parts. First, the four research questions are answered. This is accomplished by summarizing key changes in Puerto Rican culture during 1898 and 1917, defining the dress of Puerto Rican women throughout the time period, outlining clear differences of Puerto Rican and U.S. women's fashions, and by assessing whether acculturation positively or negatively influenced the lives of the women of the island. Second, implications for the study of material culture and Puerto Rican fashion history are presented. Third, suggestions for future research are proposed. Fourth, the chapter ends with a final summation.
What was the cultural context for the critical periods of 1898 and 1917?

The Spanish-American War of 1898 resulted in "a new era in the cultural history of Puerto Rico" (Fernández Mendez, 1973, p. 610). The new influence of American culture in Puerto Rico brought meaningful changes to the lives of Puerto Rican women at the turn of the twentieth century. The change in their roles and social status is obvious when comparing the Puerto Rican woman of 1898, with the new "American" Puerto Rican woman of 1917.

In 1898 the island of Puerto Rico was an off-spring of Spain and its language and customs. Having dominated Puerto Rican society for over four hundred years, the presence of Spain was reflected through a paternalistic and patriarchal mode of thinking. As a result of this type of culture, the condition of the Puerto Rican women at the end of the nineteenth century was one of subordination and inferior status. Thus, the social rule of "little children must be seen and not heard" was befitting of the women of the island.

The life of the Puerto Rican women of 1898 can be best described as one of seclusion, objectification, and ignorance. The life of the middle and upper-class women was conducted mainly indoors; this seclusion was reinforced by the social custom requiring a duenna for activities outside the home. Additionally, their lack of education further isolated the women. When the women of the island were permitted to go outside the home, the opportunities seemed to center on displaying their fine features and beauty, well-mannered behavior, and their newly learned accomplishments. It was as if the women were allowed out of the house for the purpose of advertising their family. A wife communicated to the rest of Puerto Rican society her excellence as a wife and
mother. A daughter promoted her family by showcasing her achievements and
gracefulness. The objectification of Puerto Rican women supported Spanish patriarchal
customs by publicizing male (husband, father) dominance in the family.

My suggestion that Puerto Rican women of 1898 were seen more as objects than
women of substance is manifested in their lack of academic education, which was
described as “pitiably behind” (Hamm, 1899, p. 132). Of course there are always
exceptions to generalizations, because some of the women were educated by governesses
or tutors. However, because women of intelligence were a threat to Puerto Rican male
dominance in the family, minimum formal education was required of ladies of the island
in 1898. Instead of a formal education young women learned “what every girl in
society needed to know,” including playing an instrument, singing, painting, and
drawing, to name a few.

Some writers suggest that the secluded lifestyle of the Puerto Rican women of
the late 1890s resulted in the absence of a “bourgeois spirit” and thus, their activities
and travel outside the home were curtailed (Acosta-Belén, 1986, p. 3; Hamm, 1899, p.
138). This was to change with the Spanish-American war of 1898 and the arrival of
the Americans and their customs.

The position of the Puerto Rican women changed dramatically with the socio-
economic changes brought by the Americans in 1898. Upon arrival of the U.S.,
transportation, health, and education were improved. But these American
accomplishments were foreshadowed by an economic and social crisis in the island. The
period of crisis at the beginning of American sovereignty was a compilation of a
decrease in international trade; a devaluation of the riches of Puerto Rico due to the
monetary exchange of Spanish currency to U.S. currency, violent attacks by groups of
lower class islanders toward the Puerto Rican's of Spanish descent; and the destruction of plantations, factories and houses by the 1899 hurricane San Ciriaco (Scarano, 1993, p. 563-568). As a result of these economic and social crises many well-to-do Puerto Ricans either lost all or had a decrease in their wealth, many plantations owners were not able to restore production in their haciendas, and American investors and corporations invaded the island in the search for land and business investment. As a consequence of this “second” invasion, the plantation system in Puerto Rico went from small family-run haciendas, to large American corporations. In direct correlation with these changes, the roles of the well-to-do Puerto Rican males and females were modified, with the Puerto Rican women becoming more visible and important in society. Their new place in society was to be supported by not only the education they could receive in grammar, middle, and high schools, but by attending the university and earning degrees. Through education, Puerto Rican women achieved that “bourgeois spirit”, which released them from a life of seclusion and ignorance.

By 1917 economic freedom and emancipation for the women of the island was enhanced through U.S. citizenship and World War I. With the granting of citizenship to Puerto Ricans a great migration to the mainland resulted and the women who stayed on the island realized new opportunities for advancement. As in the United States, Puerto Rican women took on some typically male roles while the men were fighting in Europe during World War I. Because of all these economic and social changes, the women of Puerto Rico caught up and became “modern” women of the early twentieth century, becoming teachers and nurses, organizing civic groups, becoming involved in the suffragist movement and maintaining an interest in fashion and appearance.
What was fashionable Puerto Rican women's dress for the period, 1895-1920?

The fashionable appearance of the Puerto Rican women in the three years prior to the 1898 Spanish-American war and the ensuing U.S. takeover of the island was to an extent parallel to the fashionable appearance of the U.S. women. The bell shape silhouette in vogue was supported by a pulled up hairstyle, fitted or shirtwaist bodice, high stand/band collar, long full or narrow sleeves with shoulder puffs, belted narrow waistline, and full "bell shape" skirt. These garments were embellished with lace bertha collars, pleating, embroidery, and flowers. In addition, the Puerto Rican women carried a folding fan or a long chain necklace with a folding fan.

After the Spanish-American war, the mode of dress in Puerto Rico did not change dramatically until 1902, when the S curve-monobosom look made its appearance. This fashion consisted of the "pompadour" hairstyle, very ornate shirtwaist with "pouter-pidgeon blousing," long sleeves with bottom fullness, high stand collars, S-bend waistline, and smooth over the hips skirt with flared fullness at the bottom. A modified version of the S-curve but without monobosom followed around 1906. This style of fashion consisted of a softer waved full hairstyle, all around fullness bodice with high stand collar and long sleeves, natural small waistline and either a full gored skirt or a stitched down pleated one. For this style, ornamentation (lace, pin-tucks, ruffles, etc.) first appeared heavily but began to diminish with time. Later during the time period of the S-curve-no monobosom (1906-1911), the princess style dress made its appearance. This silhouette was based on one piece garments with a full length front panel and no waistband. Style features of the dress included lower necklines (jewel, etc.), long narrow sleeves, and gored full skirts or more A-line form-fitting skirts. As
a continuation of the move toward a less fuller silhouette, the empire style came into
fashion in Puerto Rico around 1911. With the narrower silhouette, the hairstyle
became sleeker; it was waved and molded closer to the head. The empire silhouette was
manifested through semi-fitted or fitted bodices of a shorter length, a higher waistline,
and with skirts of the A-line look or the straight look. With the complementing lower
necklines and kimono style sleeves, the empire look was one of modest embellishment.
With the emergence of all these silhouettes, the presence of headwear (i.e. hats)
increased. Jewelry and the folding fan and/or the long chain necklace with the folding
fan were constantly present in the dress of the Puerto Rican women of the beginning of
the twentieth century.

Furthering the tradition of simplicity, the pear-shape silhouette and the
tubular-barrel became the dominant look for the last four years of the period in
question (1895-1920). These simple and uncluttered looks were completed with a
short hairstyle and high crown hats worn low over the eyes, a baggy bodice, low
necklines, simple sleeves, loose waistline, and plain skirts. Trims were either non
existent or kept to a minimum and the amount of jewelry worn at one time was reduced.
Still the folding fan and the long chain necklace with the folding fan were part of their
appearance.

To what extent and when were Puerto Rican fashions influenced by U.S.
fashions in the 22 year period immediately following the takeover in
1898?

The mode of dress of the Puerto Rican women in 1898, at the time Americans
arrived to the island, can be described as the western fashion of the time. Many
similarities were seen with Puerto Rican and American women’s fashions. The extent of
the similarities are best characterized by the notion of integration, one type of positive acculturation. The Puerto Rican women adopted many aspects of American dress (moving toward the dominant culture), but at the same time held on to certain features of their appearance that reflect their Hispanic heritage (not releasing completely their identity).

At the beginning of the time period, fashionable hats were not common to Puerto Rican women’s dress. More than likely, the lack of hats on the heads of Puerto Rican women was their way to keep cool in the warm humid weather of the island. In addition, the absence of hats may also be attributed to the Puerto Rican women’s preference for the mantilla, supported by Margherita Hamm (1899) in her travels through Puerto Rico in 1898 who described the women of the island as wearing mantillas as a substitute for hats. While mantillas were not observed in the photographs used in this study, it does not mean that the women were not using mantillas because there is written proof of their being worn by the women of the island from Margherita Hamm’s writings. In actuality, the wearing of mantillas would not only explain the lack of hatwear adopted by Puerto Rican women, but also would reflect an interest in sustaining the Spanish heritage of Puerto Rico.

The Spanish heritage of the Puerto Rican women was exemplified by wearing the mantilla and also by using the folding fan. These two items of clothing have become universal symbols of Spain and its culture, and in turn of Latin America. Even though fans from time to time were considered fashionable items in the U.S., they never became such an identifying aspect of dress as with the women of Hispanic heritage, in this case Puerto Rican women. For these ladies, the folding fan was not just an item used to cool off from the heat, it actually became a fashionable item for their dress. Long chain
necklaces with the folding fans were seen on Puerto Rican women outdoors, indoors, in casual and formal social functions, as well as in photographs taken in studios. The way these chain fans were worn gives the impression that they were considered another piece of jewelry. These “necklaces” came with beads, pearls, chain link, black double link material, and the women matched them with the appearance (casual, formal) of the time.

Just as the mantilla and the fan, jewelry was another aspect of dress common to the appearance of Puerto Rican women. The women of the island tended to wear jewelry frequently and in a variety of quantities. Earrings, necklaces, brooches, bracelets, and finger rings were common items with the Puerto Rican ladies. These were worn in single quantity as in a pair of earrings, but more often the jewelry was worn in multiple quantities or combinations. This unique dominant feature in the dress of the women of the island could be interpreted as a manifestation of their indigenous heritage, since it has been said that the Puerto Rican women’s love for adornments was inherited from the Taina indians (Diaz Alcaide, 1993, p. 93).

Another mode of dress that seems unique to the Puerto Rican ladies at the end of the nineteenth century was the “untucked” shirtwaist look. This manner of dress was observed in casual settings- outdoors, relaxing at home. Because the climate in Puerto Rico is extremely warm and humid, maybe this “untucked” look was a way for the Puerto Rican women to adapt fashionable dress to the weather and to become more comfortable. This “untucked” look would have increased the air flow under the women’s garments alleviating the hot sticky feeling of closely-fitted clothing against the body. This “untucked” look was seen in pictures of Cuban and Philippine women during the same time period published in the 1899 book Our islands and their people by
W.S. Bryan. In addition, it is supported by Hamm's (1899) observation that the Puerto Rican women's mode of dress was influenced by the tropical climate (p. 154).

In comparing the fashion of the U.S. during 1898-1917 with Puerto Rican women's fashion, a time difference is noted. While the U.S. fashion silhouette changed from the bell shape to the S-curve-monobosom at the beginning of the twentieth century (1900), Puerto Rican women did not start wearing the S-curve silhouette and all its components ("pidgeon-pout" waist, full skirt, S-curve belt, etc.) until around 1902. Puerto Rican women seemed to lag in the adoption of this fashion by a couple of years. This observation was also noticed by other writers who told how the ladies of the higher classes [in Puerto Rico] dressed in Parisian styles, although these styles would usually be a year or two old by the time they reached Puerto Rico (Hill, 1899, p. 166; Morris, 1899, p. 205). Furthermore, the time lag was observed in adoption of subsequent silhouettes until around 1914.

The delay in adopting fashions of the U.S. could be explained by the major changes the island experienced at the turn of the century. During the first two years of American sovereignty on the island, Puerto Rico found itself in a state of economic and social crisis. These conditions started with the 1898 U.S. naval blockade during the Spanish-American war, which affected international commerce. After the war, Puerto Rican goods such as coffee, became "foreign" imports to Spain, which increased the tariffs and the prices. With new government in the island came the devaluation of the Spanish coin, which had an exchange rate of 60 cents to one American dollar. As a result, Puerto Ricans lost wealth and American investors saw opportunity for cheap goods and land. To add to this economic crisis, merchants and plant owners of Spanish descent throughout the island became the victims of an anti-Spanish violent movement.
These Puerto Ricans were subjected to attacks to their homes, stores, or warehouses, which were ransacked, burned, or destroyed. As a consequence, many of these Puerto Ricans were left without a home, business, or properties. As a climax to this period, in August 8th 1899, Puerto Rico was hit by a very powerful and destructive hurricane, *San Ciriaco*. Such was the magnitude of this storm that plantations, factories, and houses where completely demolished, and thousands of Puerto Ricans, including the well-to-do, were reduced to poverty and beggary (Bryan, 1899, p. 382). The well-to-do women of the island, who had been reared in comfort and luxury, found themselves relying on public relief for the necessities of life (Bryan, 1899, p. 383).

With such a period of economic and social instability in Puerto Rico during 1899-1900, it is not surprising that fashionable dress arrived late to the island. Even if it was available, the well-to-do inhabitants may not have been able to afford fashion at the time. As a result, it is understandable that the women of Puerto Rico would have been a little behind in their dress.

As the U.S. maintained their presence in Puerto Rico, stability was seen in government and trade, in addition to the new opportunities given to women (i.e., education), the women of the island began to catch up with the current fashions in vogue in the United States. This "catching up" may be what Alpheous Verrill described in 1914 as the "Americanization" of the island. He noticed how the Puerto Ricans were adopting American ideas, that were reflected in their social life, business, and clothing attire. Americanization was even more prominent during the last time period studied on this research, 1918-1920, when the manner of dress of the Puerto Rican women could be said to be the same as that of the United States-simple and practical.

The Puerto Rican women through the twenty-two years of American influence in
the island were seen to adopt enough of the aspects of U.S. dress to be considered dressed "a la American" by 1920. This gradual adjustment of a garment style to the current social conditions (i.e. adaptation) is one of the seven principles of acculturation described by Anawalt (1992). Adaptation in Puerto Rican culture through dress was exemplified by the lack of hats worn by the women at the beginning of American sovereignty, which by 1920, became a common aspect of their dress.

Even though Puerto Rican women embraced an American style of dress, they did not relinquish all of their Spanish aspects of dress. This continuity of a clothing item despite historical changes and social pressures is another of the principles of acculturation, which is known as persistence (Anawalt, 1992). Persistence, was seen through the constant sight of the folding fan and/or long chain necklace with folding fan throughout the twenty-five years covered by the study. So dominant is this aspect of clothing to their appearance that Verrill (1914) reported how even with the obvious Americanization of the island, the women of Puerto Rico were very much still attached to their fans (p. 104).

Throughout the first twenty-two years of American sovereignty in Puerto Rico, the life of the women of the island changed drastically. Women unwrapped themselves from seclusion and ignorance, emerging as independent and educated women. Puerto Rican women were no longer sequestered in the home and suppressed by codes of behavior; they developed a voice in society that could not be ignored. By their adoption of aspects of American fashion, the women of Puerto Rico reinforced their new status in Puerto Rican society. This notion is supported by Milbank (1989), who defined the new American woman of the first two decades of the twentieth century as independent and professional, a view reflected in the U.S. fashion for this time (p. 46). The
correlation can be made between the U.S. fashion adopted by the Puerto Rican women and the new independent and educated women in society.

**Did acculturation have a positive or negative impact on Puerto Rican women?**

Acculturation is defined as "the contact and resulting change that occurs when two cultures come into direct contact with each other" (Padilla, 1980, p. 4). For Puerto Rico at the beginning of the twentieth century, acculturation to American culture commenced with contact in the form of invasion; contact continued through trade and education. Many aspects of American life and culture, including women's fashions were adopted.

The acculturation of Puerto Rico to many aspects of U.S. culture is exemplified by the women of the island. These formerly secluded and ignorant ladies took the opportunities given to them with the American takeover to become more like the "bourgeois spirited" women. These "modern" Puerto Rican women of the beginning of the twentieth century achieved their new status in society through education, resulting in the formation of civic groups, involvement in the suffragist movement, and adopting the simple and practical fashions of the American women. With this new outlook and role in Puerto Rican society, it can be concluded that the acculturation had a positive impact on the women of Puerto Rico.

Of the two types of positive acculturation, assimilation and integration (Padilla, 1980), integration can be used to classify the positive acculturation that the Puerto Rican women have experienced. During integration the group in contact (i.e. Puerto Rican women) moves to become part of the dominant society (i.e. U.S. culture) without relinquishing cultural identity. For assimilation, Puerto Rican women would have had
to relinquish cultural identity while moving into the dominant society. Integration was accomplished by adopting certain aspects of U.S. mode of dress while keeping features of their Spanish fashionable dress, particularly the fan and jewelry. The positive integration can also be interpreted as incorporation, one of the four steps composing Eicher and Erekosima's (1980) model of cultural authentication.

Incorporation, in addition to selection, characterization, and transformation, are the steps of cultural authentication, which is the “process of assimilation of a ‘foreign’ object or idea ‘into a valued indigenous object or idea’” (Mead & Pederson, 1995, p. 431). In the case of Puerto Rican women during 1895-1920, selection and characterization did not occur because they neither adopted an unchanged object or idea from the U.S. and changed its use, nor attached their own symbolic meaning to an intact object or idea adopted from the U.S. Additionally, transformation appears not to have occurred because the Puerto Rican women did not adopt American objects or ideas and then change their physical construct and their symbolic meaning. In contrast, incorporation (the adoption of an original object or idea with new symbolic meaning and identified as part of that social group) seems to have taken place with the women of Puerto Rico. This can be seen by their willingness to include many aspects of American fashion into their apparel, as a way to symbolize their new “freedom” in Puerto Rican society.

These findings suggest that for one step of cultural authentication to occur, the other three steps may not necessarily be needed. Similar conclusions have been drawn by Pannabecker (1990) and Mead and Pederson (1995).
Implications

The findings from this study should prove useful in a number of ways. A valuable aspect of this study to understanding Puerto Rican history is an implication regarding the data analyzed and the preservation of the history of the island. This study relied on photographs to analyze Puerto Rican women’s fashions. There is a lack of historical garments accessible for study in Puerto Rico. Where are the garments? Obviously there are some out there, held by private individuals which are not in museums or collections. It is imperative that these pieces of history be well-kept and stored correctly, to preserve this aspect of Puerto Rican history. If Puerto Rico was to establish an historic costume collection, garments currently in personal collections could be placed there for storage and conservation, and for use by future generations of Puerto Ricans. Clothing is a great communicator of culture and society, in the past, present, and future. In a society, such as Puerto Rico, where clothing and appearance have been such important factors, what better way to protect and honor history than through a historic costume and textiles collection?

The increased understanding of how dress is influenced by acculturation may be useful for comprehending future changes in material culture occurring with interdependence and the blurring of cultural lines. Clothing could be used as a guide of what may happen in countries as Mexico and other Caribbean Basin countries which are being heavily influenced by the U.S. Through its economic influence, the cultural aspects of the U.S. may be adopted in these countries. More distant traditional groups could make cultural and social changes to their way of life if they foresee them as valuable; for example, some of the Mexican - Indian groups. With NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) and all the American business and goods invading new
territories of Mexico, “new” groups may be encountered, and in turn influenced by the U.S.

**Future Research**

From this study on Puerto Rican women’s clothing from 1895-1920, future research is proposed. This first step in understanding the fashion of Puerto Rican women in the twentieth century could be continued by studying the subsequent decades of the century, looking for the persistence of a unique Puerto Rican style of dress. In addition, looking into the past (i.e. before the twentieth century) would be useful in filling the gap in the knowledge of what the fashionable clothing of women in Puerto Rico has been throughout time. The results could add information to western civilization’s costume history, and to the knowledge of material culture in Hispanic Latin America.

Another idea to investigate involves the manner of dress of the “lower-class” of Puerto Rico. Since this research focused on the well-to-do (high, high-middle class) women of Puerto Rico, it would be interesting to look at the *jibaras*, the *mestizas*, and women of African descent to see whether the American culture influenced them as extensively as it did the well-to-do women of the island. How were these other groups of Puerto Ricans affected by acculturation?

It would be interesting to study the Southern states in the U.S. during the end of the nineteenth century to see if the women of these areas also wore the “untucked” shirtwaists and went without hats. This might provide further support for the interpretation of the “untucked” shirtwaist and hatless look as a warm weather adaptation of dress. Or by conducting such research, the possibility of the “untucked” look being an adaptation of the 18th-century short gown, which was worn for comfort by women, could be brought to light.
Other ideas for future research include the study of Puerto Rican women and how they maintained aspects of dress that contribute to their contemporary unique identity. Of particular interest is the role of the folding fan in Puerto Rican women’s life, its symbolism and meaning. Finally, it would be of great value to conduct research comparing Puerto Ricans with other Hispanics groups who have been in direct contact with American culture, to determine any similarities or differences in acculturation. A study like this could help reiterate how Puerto Ricans are distinguishable from other Hispanic groups, because of their very unique situation of being part-Spanish and part-American.

Final Summation

With the centennial of the Spanish-American war being commemorated in 1998, one-hundred years of American influence in Puerto Rico will have taken place, making this research of great importance in understanding the situation of the island (as a commonwealth of the United States) and its people. First of all, this study examined the culture of Puerto Rico through women, emphasizing their roles in society and how they changed with the American influence. Secondly, as a continuation of the theme of Puerto Rican women, their manner of dress before and after American sovereignty of the island was described and analyzed. Thirdly, the anthropological concept of acculturation was used to examine the fashions of Puerto Rican women, and to understand the “why” related to the adoption of American aspects of dress. This research not only adds to the cultural literature of Puerto Rico, but the detailed accounting of Puerto Rican women’s dress of 1895-1920 begins to fill a void found in the costume history literature of western civilization and of Puerto Rican women’s dress.
REFERENCES


A dictionary of textile terms (13th ed.). New York: Dan River Inc.


Hill, R. (1898). Cuba and Porto Rico with the other islands of the West Indies: Their topography, climate, flora, products, industries, cities, people, political conditions, etc. New York: Century Company.


APPENDIX A

PRELIMINARY LIST OF INSTITUTIONS FOR SOURCES OF DATA

Archivo General de Puerto Rico
Ateneo Puertorriqueño
Biblioteca General de Puerto Rico
Caribbean and Latin American Studies Library
Carnegie Public Library
Casa del Libro - museum
Centro de Estudios Avanzados de Puerto Rico y el Caribe Biblioteca
Centros de Estudios de la Realidad Puertorriqueña
Colección Puertorriqueña - Universidad de Puerto Rico
Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña
Museo de la Familia Puertorriqueña
Public Library Services - Department of Education
APPENDIX B

FINAL LIST OF INSTITUTIONS FOR SOURCES OF DATA

Archivo Central - University of Puerto Rico
Archivo General de Puerto Rico
Ateneo Puertorriqueño
Biblioteca General de Puerto Rico
Centro de Estudios Avanzados de Puerto Rico y el Caribe Biblioteca
Colección Puertorriqueña - University of Puerto Rico
Laboratorio Fotográfico - University of Puerto Rico
Museo de Arte de Ponce
Museo de la Histora de Ponce
Tomasini Gómez - family photo album
APPENDIX C
DATA COLLECTION FORM

Data collection form

number: ___________

site: _____________________________________________

library archives museum other

type of data:

photograph illustration painting other: ___________

source:

_____ photo collection: catalogue/accession #: ____________________

_____ magazine: name: ____________________ date: __________ vol#: ______ issue: ______ pg.: ______

_____ newspaper: name: ____________________ date: __________ vol#: ______ issue: ______ pg.: ______

_____ book: title: __________________

author(s): __________________

date: __________ city/publisher: __________________

PB: __________

_____ other: __________________________________________

information:

picture copy both
(visual) (written) (visual/written)

approx. date: __________ # of persons: ______

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area/location: _______________________________________

situation: __________________________________________

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APPENDIX D

PRIMARY DATA USED IN RESEARCH

BOOKS


Hill, R.  (1898).  Cuba and Porto Rico with the other islands of the West Indies: Their topography, climate, flora, products, industries, cities, people, political conditions, etc.  New York: Century Company.


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PHOTOGRAPHS

Institutions and corresponding photographs (research photograph #)

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Archivo General de Puerto Rico
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APPENDIX E

GLOSSARY OF COSTUME TERMS

Ascot tie - a rectangular scarf with wide square ends, looped high on the neck in a way which the knot is hidden.

Bateau - a long horizontal neckline.

Bertha - a wide collar worn around the neckline, often made of lace.

Bodice - the upper part of a woman’s dress above the waist.

Bolero - a short, waist-length jacket with rounded corners, worn open.

Calico-cotton cloth printed in sharply etched, small print designs.

Cuban heel - a turn of the century heel of medium height tapering slightly towards the ground.

Epaulets - a decorative strap or band at the shoulder, used most often in military dress, but is also applied to ornamental features in civil costumes.

Fichu - a small triangular or rectangular shawl or scarf, worn over the shoulders and generally tied in the front like a kerchief.

Gaiters - a covering for the ankle and lower leg generally made of cloth, leather, or elasticated fabric.

Moiré - a rippling pattern, similar to a wood grain on taffeta and silk.

Oxfords - a traditional design of closed shoe with tie front.

Percale - medium-weight, printed cotton cloth with a firm, smooth finish.
Plastron - a V-shaped front of a woman's costume resembling the breastplate of a suit armor.

Pompadour - coiffure style with the hair brushed up softly from the forehead and the nape.

Raglan - a sleeve seamed diagonally from neckline to underarm.

Revers - the turned back part of a coat, jacket or dress, which combines with the collar to lie flat round the neckline.

Sateen - a satin made from cotton, durable and heavy.

Serge - a sturdy woolen woven with a diagonal rib on both sides. Used for suits and coats.

Shirtwaist - an American term for a blouse fashionable in the years 1890-1910

Straw boater - a hard straw hat fashionable as summer which had a flat, low crown decorated by ribbon and bow and a flat brim.